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New Statesman

SECRETS OF THE PONTING TRIAL

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New Statesman

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New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU
Tel: 01-253 2001/Editorial 01-253 2003
Telex: 28449/Cables: Newstat, London EC1
© 1985 Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd & contributors
Published and distributed by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd

Editor: Hugh Stephenson; **Deputy Editor:** Sarah Benton; **News Editor:** Andrew Lumsden; **Editorial staff:** Duncan Campbell, Jane Dibblin, Rob Edwards (Scotland), Peter Kellner (Political editor), John Rentoul, Claudia Wright (Washington); **Literary Editor:** Gillian Wilce; **Deputy Literary Editor:** Harriett Gilbert; **Production Manager:** Joanne Hurst; **Layout & design:** Vicky Hutchings; **Editorial Assistant:** Jane Thomas

Subscriptions: Cecilia Milton, Joan Scanlon; **Circulation:** Liz Cooper, Susan Dineley, John Duncan (London); **Display advertisements:** Michael Roberts (01-253 2001); **Classified advertisements:** Laura Berryman, David Jones (01-251 5487)

Subscription rates: UK & Eire £37; Europe (air mail only) £41; rest of world: air speeded £41; air mail £52. USA: air speeded $62; air mail $83. Canada: air speeded Can $72; air mail Can $97.

Second class postage paid at New York, NY USPS 382260. Air freight in US by Speedimpex USA Inc. (US Postmaster: Address changes should be sent to New Statesman, Speedimpex USA Inc., 45-45 39th Street, Long Island City, NY 11104)

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New Statesman

Vol 109 No 2813 15 February 1985

The show trial that got away

MRS THATCHER obviously did not like the Ponting verdict. She must have disliked the almost universally unfavourable press that it got just as much. On the Left and among the *Guardian*-reading classes, the reaction was one of obvious surprise and delight. But reaction on the Right was almost equally anti-government.

It ranged from *The Times* — 'One of the virtues of the jury system is that sometimes juries come up with a verdict which transcends all the fumbling of legislators and lawyers' — to the *Daily Mail* — 'She wants to see all leakers keel-hauled. This time, a British jury (vetted) — and after a summing up by the Judge which can have promised no comfort to Mr Ponting — has given Mrs Thatcher her comeuppance'.

It is difficult to catch the precise moment of a change in general public mood, but in this evident and widespread pleasure at the sight of the Prime Minister with egg all over her face, the Ponting trial may well turn out to be the symbolic moment at which public opinion turned against the hectoring and autocratic manner of Thatcher government. It reinforces the feeling, now being reflected in the opinion polls, that Mrs Thatcher's insistence on extracting an unconditional and humiliating surrender *in writing* from the National Union of Mineworkers before she will allow the coal board to enter into 'unconditional' negotiations to end the coal strike is purely vindictive.

Mrs Thatcher's smokescreen of indignation about Neil Kinnock's parliamentary etiquette is proof that she needs to divert attention from the two central conclusions to come out of this affair. The first is that the government — in particular she and John Stanley, the armed forces minister — have consistently and deliberately misled Parliament from the very beginning of the Belgrano story. The second is that Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act, for over a decade in disrepute, is now in tatters. The Attorney General's dogged insistence on Tuesday that the government had no intention of repealing or reforming the Act and that he intended to continue enforcing it were not a serious statement of policy. The words came out mechanically because he could not at that moment think of anything else to say.

Sir Michael Havers's 'statement' on the outcome of the Ponting trial in fact gave the game away. Last August, he said, the Solicitor General and the Director of Public Prosecutions formed the view that there had been a 'serious breach of duty and trust by a senior civil servant'. He did not suggest that there had been any leak of secret information of a kind prejudicial to national security. Indeed the Ponting prosecution admitted from the outset that there had been none.

An 'official secrets act' accordingly should have no place in such cases. Alleged breaches of duty and trust, other than where spying and national security are supposed to be involved, should be dealt with as disciplinary matters within the civil service according to proper procedures. The criminal law and in particular a badly drafted 1911 Act, whose origin was an hysterical German spy scare, are wholly inappropriate instruments.

It is, though, an open question whether we want a Freedom of Information Act in its place, if it is to be drafted under this government. The Freedom of Information Campaign has

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gathered to itself an impressive array of former senior civil servants, who now claim to have seen the light on the subject of open government. But it remains true in general that serving parliamentary draftspersons have anti-liberterian instincts. With the encouragement of the most anti-libertarian government in recent times, a Freedom of Information bill now, purporting to define strict rules for the protection of an apparently much narrower range of true 'official secrets' affecting national security and the national interest, is as likely as not to leave us in a worse situation than the one we are in now.

A Tory Freedom of Information Act?

The prospect of getting sensible reforming legislation in this area out of a government smarting over the Ponting reversal is slight, particularly since it is still sitting on a massive parliamentary majority, most of which now seems to think that — post-Ponting — the Official Secrets Act should be tightened rather than abolished.

The best tactic for reformers, therefore, is probably to try to ensure that the government is shamed or laughed out of using existing legislation in this way again, while preparing for proper reform under another government.

It would, however, be an illusion to think that reform of the Official Secrets Act, even if combined with a 'code of ethics' for civil servants who encounter a conflict of loyalty between their duty to the government of the day and their duty to truth and decency, would somehow 'solve' the difficulty in which Clive Ponting found himself. Institutions, particularly closed institutions with hierarchical structures, may pretend that they are open to internal criticism. The fact is that they are not.

The history of those at lower and middle levels of institutions like the civil service who have stood up or spoken out against established policy is not encouraging to free speech or dissent. The nuclear industry in this country, for example, has a disgraceful record of riding out those who have had the temerity in the national interest to question received wisdom about, say, safety standards and power station design.

In Mr Ponting's own case, for example, it appears that his career was 'parked in orbit' as a result of his having discovered £12 million a year of straight waste in MoD meat procurement while working in the Cabinet Office's 'Rayner unit', until ironically Sir Derek Rayner and the Prime Minister intervened to see that he got promotion to a job in his old department, from which in due course he leaked the Belgrano papers.

No doubt important marginal improvements can be made in the codes which govern the rights and duties of civil servants in future. But a right of complaint either to an independent board or to a head of department will in practice be of little comfort to future Pontings. There are circumstances in which individuals have no choice, if they consider the needs of the public good to be overwhelming, but to leak or to resign and speak out publicly — and to risk the inevitable consequences for their careers.

3 out of 10 for McCowan

At a professional level Mr Justice McCowan is the person to come worst out of this trial. His attempt to argue that 'the interests of the State' were the same as 'the interest of the government of the day' was so crude that it would have won low marks in a school essay competition in civics. His determination, expressed with the jury withdrawn, to direct that Ponting had no defence, thus effectively instructing the jury to convict, was so obviously inept politically that the *prosecution* asked for an adjournment. During the adjournment 'recent authorities', that is, recent contrary Appeal Court judgements of which he might have been supposed to be aware, were 'brought to his attention'. (The judge's further ignorance of the 1981 Contempt of Court Act meant that he did not give the necessary direction to stop this episode being reported while the trial was still in progress in last Sunday's *Observer*.)

But Mr Justice McCowan is only typical of the recent tendency in the judiciary to place the narrowest possible construction on the rights of the individual and to give the widest latitude to the government of the day. Since this was not so under Labour governments, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the change is politically influenced. The continuing supine acceptance by the Court of Appeal of the basic principle, first enunciated in 1916, that 'those who are responsible for national security must be the sole judges of what the national security requires' denies the basic idea of separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary. The present House of Lords judges use less authoritarian prose in their judgements, but as the GCHQ union case showed, produce in effect virtually identical conclusions.

Little wonder then that those looking for preferment in the legal profession — lawyers who want to become circuit judges, county court judges who would like to move to the High Court, High Court judges with real ambition for preferment — are tuned to the political flavour of the moment.

Mrs Thatcher may well be telling the truth when she denies being involved in the *formal* decision to prosecute Clive Ponting — though her record for candour in other aspects of the affair gives her no right to get on any high horse about the issue. She was, though, kept fully informed via John Stanley while she was on holiday in Switzerland. If she had chosen to express strong opposition to this blundering attempt to revive Section 2, the Attorney General would no doubt have found it in him to reconsider the 'autonomous' decision of the law officers to prosecute. □

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HOWE INTENSIFIES AXIS WITH TURKISH JUNTA

A FURTHER stepping-up of British pressure to ride roughshod over human rights objections to President Evren's military junta in Turkey has been signalled in this week's visit to Ankara by Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe. Royalty was used last winter in the person of the Duke of Kent (*NS* 26 October 1984). CHRIS CHRISTENSEN reports

IT'S ALL in the interests of trade deals including nuclear power and military procurement — just as the covert Chilean connection (*NS* cover story 25 January) was in the interests of the Falklands war. Firms expecting Howe to 'bat for Britain' this week will have included Trafalgar House, tendering for the $200 million second Bosphorus bridge, Northern Engineering Industries (the $1billion Akkayu nuclear power contract), and British Aerospace. All were represented on October's British Overseas Trade Department delegation to Turkey led by Kent.

According to British Aerospace, since that visit negotiations with the junta for 20 Tornado aircraft and auxilliary facilities valued at $500m have reached an advanced stage. It's also understood that the junta have declared a strong interest in purchasing Rapier (ground-to-air) and Alarm (air-to-air) missile systems.

Human rights nexus

From the standpoint of his Turkish hosts, Howe's present visit will have served a far wider purpose, coinciding as it does with the junta's renewed efforts for rehabilitation in Europe. Prime Minister Turgut Ozal is thought especially to have pressed Howe for British backing for the removal of EEC sanctions against Turkey.

Currently some £360m of EEC aid is blocked by the European Parliament because of the continued human rights violations in Turkey — but the majority in favour of maintaining the embargo has fallen, since the elections of last June, to three.

Both the junta and its creditors take the view that improvements in Turkey's human rights image — the reality being a separate issue — will improve the country's credit standing. There's no doubt this will have been impressed firmly upon Geoffrey Howe (probably in the context of the above-mentioned contracts).

To date the Foreign Office has favoured what it describes as a 'softly softly' approach to human rights violations in Turkey. In practice this has meant total inactivity tempered by covert support for the efforts of the Anglo-Turkish Parliamentary Group (in effect one of the Tory party's most powerful backbench lobbies) to rehabilitate the junta. Last May, with tacit British Government approval, Turkey was re-admitted to the Council of Europe despite a report from the Council's own Legal Affairs Committee which declared that it did 'not meet the requirements of the Council (...) or the European Convention of Human Rights.'

Should Britain continue to throw the full weight of its studied indifference behind the regime's human rights violations, the consequences in Turkey are likely to be particularly severe. Although the generals have made some cosmetic concessions to European opinion — such as releasing on bail six members of the Turkish Peace Association and fifty-two members of the DISK trade union executive — the mass trials and intimidation continue unabated.

There are now 1,474 trade unionists implicated in the DISK trial, all of them facing charges carrying a minimum of five years imprisonment — the executive still face the death penalty if convicted. There are also strong indications that the military authorities intend to bring 'conspiracy' charges against a further 153 members of the Turkish Peace Association (see *NS* 23 November 1984). ●

Belfast taunt costs £5000

AN ATTEMPT by the Unionist-dominated Belfast city council to suspend a Republican councillor indefinitely and remove his voting rights for making an allegedly offensive remark about the Union Jack has been overturned in the Belfast High Court.

People's Democracy councillor John McAnulty was suspended from Belfast City council on 6 December after referring to the Union Jack as a 'butcher's apron'. Invoking standing orders from the 1930s, the Council's Unionist majority voted to bar the Republican councillor's return until he apologised.

McAnulty, one of the two People's Democracy councillors on the council, refused to do so, and was physically removed from the council chamber by RUC officers at three subsequent council meetings — which led in turn to a walk-out by all nationalist councillors including the SDLP.

It was only when he challenged the council's decision in Belfast High Court on Monday 4 February and the standing orders were declared invalid that he was allowed to return. £5000 in legal costs have been awarded against the council.

The council's action to bar McAnulty takes place against a growing campaign by the two Unionist parties and government ministers to isolate Republican and Sinn Fein councillors in the run up to May's local council elections, when Sinn Fein is expected to win between 35-55 seats.

Previously, Standing Order 31 had been used against councillors who physically or verbally attempted to disrupt council proceedings — not for offensive comments. McAnulty is now considering a claim for damages against the RUC and the Council.

Kevin Toolis

A bystander

No arrests. No press were there — peace campers beneath US Defense Secretary Weinberger's car outside Channel 4 in London last Friday (8 February) putting the underlying arguments against Molesworth evictions and Star Wars.

Channel 4 will press on with trial reporting

CHANNEL 4 intends to press ahead with its policy of transmitting nightly extracts of trials of outstanding public interest, despite Mr. Justice McCowan's unfavourable ruling on Court Report *at the outset of the Clive Ponting trial.*

'We were trying to find a technique of putting extended verbatim chunks of court proceedings on to television', explains Liz Forgan, C4's assistant controller of programmes, 'and will do other such trials as often as they arise'.

The viewing figures for this initial foray were exceptionally good — over 500,000 — despite the artificial nature of the programmes. 'They were about twice what I'd anticipated', says Forgan.

The judge's order prevented Dennis Woolf, producer of Court Report, *from using actors to take the parts of the trial's leading figures, as had originally been intended. They would have read out what had been said in court during the day. As a result of the judge's decision, edited transcripts were read aloud by well-known newsreaders.*

C4 had taken legal advice beforehand, and had notified both prosecution and defence counsel. Both the Attorney-General and the Old Bailey had been contacted. No objections had been raised prior to the start of the trial.

The judge's ruling was unprecedented and yet there was no way that C4 could challenge it. Its lawyers went to court to present arguments as to why the order was wrong. The judge refused to hear them. He said that only the prosecution and defence had legal standing to address him. It made no difference that the order was specifically directed at C4. Nor could the Channel ask the High Court to review the order. A month ago the Court ruled (very reluctantly) that contempt orders by crown court judges were immune from this review.

Rather than ruling against C4, the judge could simply have instructed the jurors not to watch the late-night programme. (Jurors are already told not to discuss trials in progress with friends or colleagues.)

Bob Woffinden

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'DROP IT ON UNCLE JOE'

THE AMERICAN government developed atomic weapons during the Second World War for use against the Russians, not the Germans. This is one of the chilling facts which emerges from a new film, *Unstable Elements*, which traces the history of the bomb.

Professor Joseph Rotblat, a physicist working in England who went to Los Alamos to help make the first atomic bomb, recalls a visit to the top secret laboratories in 1944 by General Leslie Groves, head of the Manhattan Project. Groves told the scientists: 'You realise that all our work is against the Russians?'

To men like Rotblat, who had agreed to work on the bomb only because of their fear that Hitler might get there first, Grove's remark was a revelation. 'To me', says Rotblat in the film, 'this came as a terrible shock. The Russians were our allies. Thousands were dying every day stemming the advance of the Germans.'

Unstable Elements shows how key decisions on the bomb were made in great secrecy. Professor Margaret Gowing, the official historian of Britain's nuclear programme, says Attlee and Bevin were 'paranoiac' about keeping people in the dark about their unannounced decision to build an atomic bomb, becoming enraged if pictures of nuclear installations like Harwell appeared in print. 'The press really probed very little and the public suffered as a result', says Gowing.

News-reel footage from the 1940s and '50s is used to illustrate the soft sell nuclear power received. The opening of Calder Hall power station now seems absurdly gung-ho, commentaries claiming that the new technology will atone for the past by providing cheap clean power untainted by military connection.

As the film comes up to date, it interviews e.g. Joan King, whose

Chris Madden

husband died of a brain tumour after being contaminated with plutonium at Windscale, and Ross Hesketh, the scientist who lost his job with the Central Electricity Generating Board after he publicised his belief that weapons-grade plutonium from Britain's civil nuclear reactors had been supplied to the Americans for use in weapons.

Directed by Andy Metcalf and Paul Morrison, *Unstable Elements* was made by Newsreel, a collective funded by the GLC and by Channel Four, which intends to show it in the spring. The collective hopes to find cinemas willing to show it in the week before Easter, as part of the run-up to CND's demonstrations.

Joan Smith

Unstable Elements is to be available on video (VHS) for peace groups which would like to show it. It costs £15 to rent, and enquiries should be made to the distributor. Concord Films Council, 201 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, or phone (0473) 76012.

Uncle Sam stops N York cruise case

New York: *ON 8 FEBRUARY the US Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against the Greenham women in their suit to stop deployment of cruise missiles in Britain (NS 1 February). The one-page decision upholding a lower court's dismissal, is* not *a verdict on the legality of nuclear weapons. The Appeal judges claimed the matter was not suited to the US courts.*

'This is the first case to challenge a nuclear weapons system, but it won't be the last,' says Gwyn Kirk, one of the British plaintiffs. Further, she says, the Greenham evidence is already being used in lawsuits to stop the MX missile, in defence of anti-nuclear protestors in Seattle, Washington, and in a California case against the US launch-on-warning policy. The material is also being taught in some American law schools.

But the real value of the case, Kirk argues, has been in educating the American public. The Greenham women have talked to hundreds of groups in 25 states since the case was filed a year and an half ago. 'If we can't take this question to US courts, where can we take it? We can't take it to courts in Britain, we can't bring it to the American political process. The only place we can go is to ordinary people, which I suppose is how we started at Greenham — getting people to see sense while there is still time.' (See also p.6 — Molesworth mourned)

Susan Jaffe

MISCELLANY

Splendid appointment

Engrossing reading the transcript of the Sizewell enquiry makes. We recorded (*Miscellany* 21/28 December 1984) its pleasing lines about Sir Frank Layfield, as inspector, apparently referring to John Selwyn Gummer as 'Mr Bummer'. Now the Inquiry's programme officer, an entirely likeable chap called Keith Smith, has been given the new task (transcript for day 316) of 'Pogrom Officer'.

Extra vehicular activity

The behaviour of Michael Hirst, Tory MP for Strathkelvin & Bearsden and one of the four Parliamentary Commissioners on the record-breaking enquiry (40 day mark reached this week) into Lothian regional council's

lust for a dual-carriageway into the heart of Edinburgh, is . . . well, road-hoggish. He has enfuriated anti-road witnesses, and referred to evidence in favour of the blight which hasn't actually been put before the enquiry. The £29 million project has even aroused opposition from within *the City's Tory establishment, but everyone's losing heart, and a majority for the road is expected when the Commission reaches a verdict at end-Feb. Then Parliament has the last word, which isn't expected to be 'no'. When will town-dwellers who are bipedallists get £29 million for abolishing cars? Or come to that, Hirsts?*

Hollow laughter

One of the many things for which the Home Office is taken to task in the Commission for Racial Equality's report on the Immigration Disservice (at last a public document) is the length of time that some applicants in the Indian sub-continent have to wait for entry clearances to come to Britain. Nearly two years in some cases. The government wrings its hands and says it can't afford to send out more staff to shorten the queues. But *Miscellany* has it on good authority — a former entry clearance officer in Bangladesh — that at least two Home Office politicos on 'morale-boosting' trips to the subcontinent have told High Commission staff that they're quite happy to see the queues at their present length, 'as a primary control on immigration'. The Society for Civil and Public Servants, which represents some immigration officers, doesn't think much of the 'lack of money' argument either. It points out that during the summer the Home Office drafted in an extra 30 staff to Heathrow's Terminal 3 so that American and Canadian visitors — their dollars bulging like the eyes of shops — wouldn't have to queue too long for stamps in their passports. Well, the Ambassador and High Commissioner asked nicely. Other nationals are having to wait for up to a week at times just to get their first interview.

A sorely needed word

More enchanting misprints, this time from Misprinting House Square, as was, now Gray's Inn Rd. From the Times *Lords report for Tuesday 12 February.*

Lord Harmer-Nicholls (C) said the common sense fudgement was to avoid further congestion of the already overcrowded Heathrow by spreading traffic around the country.

Ld Clark of Barbarism

Wonder if the Under Secretary for Employment, as he's eccentrically styled, has inherited the collecting bug from his TV star father Lord Clark. He should go in for piano rolls. The latest catalogue from QRF, the American firm that makes rolls for pianolas, includes a reissue of that Forties Favourite *Civilisation (Bongo, Bongo, Bongo)*. Amazing, life's coincidences, aren't they?

Ana Gram fools (16)

There's a whole science here waiting for its Newton. Ana-logy would do beautifully if it weren't for the boring existence of 'analogy'. For the truth is, some politicians are the pits when it comes to making anagrams, and Noman Fowler is an all-time pit. Which ought to tell us something about his prospects. "'N orrfel woman" is a heroic stab by Les Leeds of Chesham Bois for Woman-identified Cabinet man. Aelwyn Edwards of Abbots Langley thinks Norm would even make an 'Almoner frown', and Barbara McDowell of York wishes to goodness he would 'Learn from now [on]'. No, as with the new Minister for Education, John Selwyn Gummer (Ana Gram 13) *it's best to draw a veil over those immune to anagram magic. However sensational entries for Alexander Patrick Greysteil Hore-Ruthven,* ci-devant *Lord Gowrie, are already coming in. Send more for next week! And after him . . . yes, let's give Michael Heseltine some flak in his jacket.*

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MOLESWORTH AND THE MOURNING AFTER

POLLY WOOLLEY knew the peace village at Molesworth before the heavens, instructed by Defence Secretary Heseltine in a flak jacket, fell in during the early hours dark of 6 February. She had cooked there, slept there. She tells what it was like at the Huntingdonshire airstrip, due to be America's second UK cruise deployment base, before the troops poured in. And of how it was growing in quite a different way to Greenham. Something died — but something lives on, too.

IT SOUNDED like something from a latter-day Western. The troops came over the hill and the 'Indians' were routed. In the early hours of Wednesday, 6 February, more British troops than were used at Goose Green evicted 150 peace protesters, 25 of them children under 12, from Rainbow Fields Village at Molesworth.

'It was amazing,' said a Villager. 'At first I could just see one set of headlights moving towards us, but with an incredibly loud engine noise. Then the vehicle stopped, turned — and suddenly there was this solid wall of light — a hundred and fifty vehicles it must have been, all heading towards us across the airfield.'

There was never any doubt that the Villagers would go. The massive over-kill of the military operation (a perverse echo, perhaps, of the excessive nuclear weapons that the Village was protesting) ensured that. Throughout the night Villagers worked desperately to pack up their homes, rather than see them demolished by bulldozers — although a few chose a 'scorched earth' policy and fired their 'benders'.

The military made no exceptions. People vainly endeavoured to make road-worthy caravans that had fixed fast in the glutinous mud. A heavily pregnant woman, her baby due in mid-February, had to dismantle her tepee in near-freezing darkness so that Michael Heseltine could pose for the cameras in his flak jacket, pronouncing the operation an enormous success. Molesworth, Britain's second cruise missile deployment site, was under construction.

Different . . . not Greenham

In operational terms, Molesworth has always represented a different proposition from Greenham, the first site. There was only a deserted Second World War airfield at Molesworth, and it has never been intended to concentrate controls and personnel here as has happened at Greenham. Only the missiles will be based here, while control and personnel will be located at USAF Alconbury (currently home to the 'Blackbird' spy plane), ten miles or so to the east, presumably with a guard detail of mixed British and American troops at Molesworth.

Molesworth was differing from Greenham as a focus for protest too. While the People's Peace Camp on the far side of the base and the Ploughshares (the group behind the Wheat for the Starving) are essentially peace campaigners, the reasons for the Village are more complex. Most of them were there to oppose cruise deployment, but some were also closely involved with the Green Gathering, with its strongly ecological overtones, while others were individuals who had taken to the travelling life but needed a place to winter.

Rainbow Fields Village was thus not only a peace camp but an experiment in that much-maligned thing — an alternative life-style. There were problems; occasionally Villagers became irritated at being continually on show to well-meaning visitors who knew no better than to pick their way through Molesworth mud in trainers.

Brenda Prince/Format

The much-maligned alternative — teepee and 'bender' in Rainbow Village

As was natural in a human experiment on that scale, there were tempers lost and difficulties found. But the cause was becoming common, and a community was forging itself. The Village was growing; peace groups from around the country were adding to the jumbled collection of vans, caravans, benders and teepees there.

Spontaneous 'mead hall'

Villagers also began to build. Most visitors made the acquaintance of the Kitchen, an enormous, tarpaulin-covered, vaguely dome-like structure, which could seat fifty people at a pinch. In some ways it was vividly like an Anglo-Saxon mead-hall, with a second storey for visitors to sleep on, reached by a wooden ladder. To one side was a huge fire-place; to the other an extension that could be curtained off, which the Village children had claimed as their own, to stage plays and play endless games. In the evening, mothers who were cooking or eating in the Kitchen could leave their children to sleep there on cushions, knowing they would be warm and safe.

At the far end, behind a wooden counter, was the impressive cooking area. It had a vast, ancient wood-burning cooker, as well as a more modern one run off calor gas. In addition a large bread oven had been dug into the middle of the floor, apparently constructed of a dustbin. Seven people could work together in that Kitchen, without getting in each other's way. To anyone who has, like me, cooked there, or eaten fresh bread fragrant from the oven, or slept in front of the fire, rolled in rugs like a superannuated serf, the thought of that amazing place bulldozed or dismantled is almost heart-breaking.

There were other projects too at the Village. The school was nearing completion, and periodic sweat lodges — the peace camper's alternative to a Turkish bath and the definitive answer to the charge of dirty peace camper — were held.

But not all Molesworth projects originated in the Village. Indeed, one of the aims of all the people involved was that outside groups should have their own stake in the land, no matter where they came from.

Seeds for Ethiopia

Thus one outside group was growing potatoes for local pensioners. Another was growing sunflowers for their seeds to send to Ethiopia (as the Harvest for the Hungry had sent a lorryload of wheat the previous Seotember). A third group was building an adventure playground for resident and visiting children.

A large project was the Ploughshares crop of winter wheat to be harvested and sent to Eritrea in the spring. That, together with some cherry trees planted in memory of a young peace activist killed in a car crash, was trampled by the military.

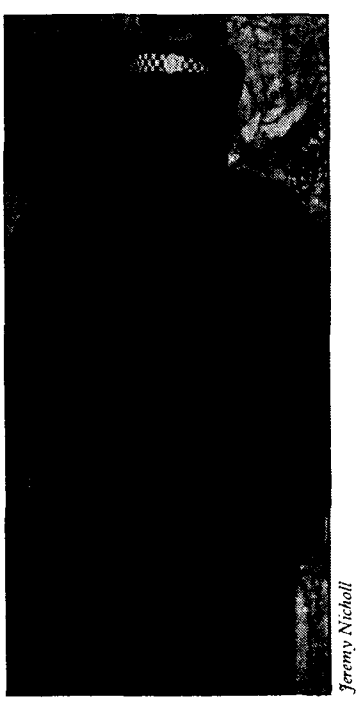
The little stone Peace Chapel, half-finished, always looked more like a picturesque ruin than an incomplete structure. The tiled roof won't be added as planned this Easter; the Chapel stands just inside the fence and on Wednesday night the police were using it . . . to scrape the all-pervasive mud from their boots.

The clearance of 6 February isn't the end of Molesworth; the continuing demonstrations are proof of that. Rainbow Fields Village may have gone but the Peace Camp on the far side of the base remains for the moment. The Ploughshares may have lost their wheat, but they're determined to return to their allotments and press ahead with the spring planting.

It may be difficult to get into the Chapel itself, but services will be held as near as possible every Sunday at 2pm. The Pledge scheme, by which people from different parts of Britain pledge themselves to visit Molesworth on different days of the week, continues to gain support. And plans for the CND Easter demonstration continue . . .

And yet, looking through the wire on Wednesday evening at the muddy, churned-up remains of Rainbow Fields Village, a verse of Housman, that a friend quoted in connection with Greenham, came irresistibly to my mind:

> This is the land of lost content,
> I see it shining plain;
> The happy highways where I went
> And may not come again. ●



Jeremy Nicholl

A friend of Michael Heseltine's

Anti-Apartheid Movement

We mistakenly referred (1 Feb., p.6) to a 'joint secretary' of the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM), there being no such position. We intended co-secretary of the London committee of AAM.

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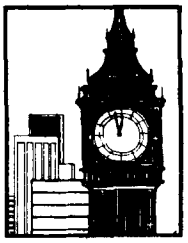

PETER KELLNER

Ponting's acquittal: the fun is only just beginning

I DOUBT if Sir Michael Creswell lost any sleep during Clive Ponting's trial; but just in case he did, he can rest more easily now.

If you look Sir Michael up in *Who's Who*, you will find the story of a routinely successful diplomat who entered the Foreign Office in 1933 and, after spells of duty in such places as Berlin, Cairo and Singapore, ended up as our ambassador to Argentina. In 1969, at the age of 60 he retired to Ewhurst in Surrey.

At this point the alert reader will have spotted an obvious connection with Mr Ponting: Sir Michael's five years in Buenos Aires. In fact, his important connection with the Ponting trial is rather less obvious, and has nothing to do with any shenanigans from the '60s. (In any case British diplomats in Argentina have a damn sight better record of suggesting how to settle the Falklands problem sensibly than their political masters.)

Sir Michael's connection with this week's events is that he is the last surviving member of the team of Foreign Office and Air Ministry officials who helped Winston Churchill during the 1930s to expose government deceit and complacency over German rearmament. As a young chap in his mid-20s he did not leak to Churchill directly; but his superior, Ralph Wigram, did — and Creswell was well aware, and fully approved, of what was happening. Had Ponting been sent to prison, Creswell could, at the very least, have been open to a charge of conspiring to break the Official Secrets Act.

A fantasy, of course. But behind it lies a serious point. Last August, when Ponting was charged, I argued in this space that the most important question at issue was this: 'Is it ultimately for the courts or for ministers themselves to arbitrate when private conscience confronts public iniquity?'

And so it proved. Ponting's judge, Mr Justice McCowan, quite correctly dismissed much of the evidence presented during the trial as so much diversionary hot air, and identified my question as the only one that mattered. He gave one answer: the jury, thank goodness, gave the other. One crucial ambiguity in the 73 year-old Act has now been resolved.

Had the judge had his way, and ministers — however vain, stupid or corrupt — been allowed sole custody of the concept of 'the interests of the State', then Creswell would equally have been guilty 50 years ago of betraying that 'interest'. For, according to McCowan's definition, it was 'in the interests of the State' at that time to deceive the public about the state of German rearmament. No matter that, had that deception continued unchallenged, we might even today be living under fascist rule: 'the interests of the State' would, in the narrow McCowan sense, have prevailed.

THREE IMMEDIATE lessons may be drawn from the Ponting verdict — and they are not the lessons drawn by much of the press on Tuesday morning, when there was much frenetic talk of the jury having created a 'leakers' charter'.

First, the jury has *not* demonstrated that any civil servant who honestly believes that ministers are wrong may leak secret information to MPs. Ponting's acquittal means that a future defendant may enter the concept of 'the interests of the State' as a defence: it is then up to a jury to decide who is right — the minister or the official. If a jury decides that a defendant is honestly motivated, but honestly wrong, then he or she will still be guilty of an offence. Ponting is a free man not because his motives were pure but because, in this instance, the jury considered that he was right and Michael Heseltine and John Stanley were wrong.

Second, a future Clive Ponting, committing an identical act under identical circumstances, might well be found guilty. This is because the prosecution failed to challenge the factual substance, as distinct from the legal merits, of the defence's contention that Ponting had acted in the wider interests of the State. In a 'Ponting mark II' trial, the prosecution would be required to demonstrate that ministers had, in fact, been better custodians than the civil servant of the interests of the State, and — who knows — a competent barrister might succeed in that venture.

Had Ponting's prosecutor conceded the jury's right to determine the matter, it would have been open to him to submit evidence that Heseltine and Stanley had acted wholly reasonably throughout last spring and summer. And, however discomforting the thought, the jury might well have agreed with such an argument. But because of the narrow basis of the prosecution's case, that argument was never put. On the issue that the jury, in the event, decided was the nub of the case, Ponting's defence had a free run.

Third, however, it would be exceedingly difficult in practice for a future prosecution to mount such a case. Suppose Roy Amlot, the prosecuting counsel in the Ponting trial, had been required to prove that the interests of the State had been jeopardised — in fact, and not just because ministers said so — and had sought to produce evidence to that effect. Heseltine and Stanley would inevitably have been star witnesses. Amlot would have asked them to justify their decision to conceal the truth from Parliament and the defence would have cross-examined them on their arguments.

That would be bad enough for any minister to contemplate. Worse would follow. When appearing in Parliament, or before a select committee, it is always open to a minister to withhold information on security grounds. In a Ponting Mark II trial that option would not be available. Imagine the scene:

Defence counsel: Secretary of State, why was the information in your possession so sensitive that you had to mislead Parliament about it?

Witness: I am sorry, but considerations of national security do not allow me to say.

Judge: It is for the jury to determine whether your considerations of national security provide adequate cause, in the interests of the State, to mislead Parliament. Answer the question.

Doubtless such an exchange would take place *in camera*. Even so, many ministers would think twice or three times before allowing themselves to be placed in this position. Already a number of MPs are annoyed by the fact that the 'crown jewels' have been read by 12 ordinary men and women and a battery of barristers, but not by any members of the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee.

There is another matter which may or, depending on the barrister you consult, may not be connected. At the end of all the legal contortions over last year's decision to ban unions at the government's communications headquarters at Cheltenham, the Law Lords ruled that although ministers had acted contrary to natural justice, they had a more important ace up their sleeve. In the words of Lord Fraser:

> The decison on whether the requirements of national security outweighed the duty of fairness is for the government and not for the courts; the government alone has access to the necessary information, and in any event *the judicial process is unsuitable for reaching decisions on national security.*

To all intents and purposes the Ponting jury has, if one may use the word, torpedoed that proposition. It is technically possible to argue that the words 'the interests of the State' are unique to the Official Secrets Act and not the same as 'national security' in any other legal context. But the practical point cannot be evaded: in any review of secrets and security legislation, either matters are arranged so that courts may question ministers on their most highly classified information — or ministers have the right to invoke 'national security' and to pull down the shutters. It is a ticklish matter. I would wager that we have not heard the last of the Ponting business by a very, very long chalk. □

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SECRETS OF THE PONTING TRIAL

Duncan Campbell and John Rentoul reveal that the contents of the top secret 'Crown Jewels' neither justify the prosecution of Clive Ponting — nor the years that parliament has been misled about the background to the *Belgrano* affair

WITH THE ACQUITTAL of Clive Ponting, more untruthful or misleading government statements have been brought to light. A sheaf of declassified internal Ministry of Defence documents that have emerged because of the trial show the ways in which Mrs Thatcher, Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine, and Armed Forces Minister John Stanley contrived, to different degrees, to mislead the public and the House of Commons over the *Belgrano* affair.

Not declassified, but far more damning is the mass of intelligence reports produced *in camera* by the prosecution during the trial. These reports — which have not come to the *New Statesman* via evidence given during the trial — show that there never was *any* first hand evidence that the *Belgrano* intended to attack the British task force.

In seeking to convict Ponting under the Official Secrets Act for leaking documents to Tam Dalyell MP, the government has succeeded in proving much of its critics' case. But one controversial charge has not been proven, thus far — the contention, determinedly advanced by Neil Kinnock, that Mrs Thatcher intervened personally to secure the original decision to prosecute Ponting.

Michael Heseltine: risked GCHQ secrets to get conviction

Two fundamental points arise from the leaked documents and from the trial:

- the *Belgrano* was *not* a threat to the task force sufficient to justify its sinking without warning on the high seas, outside the total exclusion zone around the Falklands which Britain had announced internationally. If the government is ever forced to admit this fact, Argentina could sue Britain in the International Court.
- the *Belgrano* is in any case a side issue; the core issue is the earlier the order to sink the Argentine aircraft carrier *Veinticinco de Mayo*, given on 30 April and taken before GCHQ had intercepted or decoded any orders to the Argentine Navy to attack the task force. This had even less legal justification than the attack on the Belgrano and demonstrates clearly that in its conduct the War Cabinet was pliantly in the hands of the Chiefs of Staff.

Then Foreign Secretary Francis Pym gave Mrs Thatcher a written warning that the proposed action over the aircraft carrier could be hard to justify in international law. Following the publication of the Belgrano papers in the *New Statesman* last summer (*NS* 24 August 1984), Mrs Thatcher admitted this — adding that his advice was disregarded by the war cabinet. Few MPs appear to have grasped the significance of this major 'pre-*Belgrano*' change to the naval 'rules of engagement' (Labour's George Foulkes and SDP leader Dr David Owen being the exceptions).

CENTRAL TO the Ponting prosecution were two constructs: an argument the prosecuting counsel called the 'slippery slope'; and a voluminous top secret report on the whole of the *Belgrano* affair, compiled by Ponting himself in April 1984 — now universally known as the 'Crown Jewels'.

The 'slippery slope' argument was that Thatcher, Heseltine and Stanley had been right to refuse to reveal even *unclassified* information to MPs because much of it would provoke further questions about the sinking that could only be properly answered by reference to secret intelligence. The Crown Jewels contain all that secret intelligence.

Specifically, if the government publicly revealed the known positions and course of the cruiser before the attack, it would be in an awkward position. How — with the Belgrano admitted to have been unswervingly homeward bound for 11 hours before being sunk — could they justify the oft-repeated claim that the Belgrano was a known 'threat to the task force'?

To Clive Ponting it might seem all right to tell the unclassified truth to parliament, but then insist (legitimately) on withholding secret information. But Ministers knew better than he where their political interests lay.

John Stanley: the 'slippery slope'

The 'slippery slope' argument, said Clive Ponting, was a 'complete fraud'. He explained in his evidence that it had never been advanced in the Ministry from April to July last year, when the issues were being considered. It had been contrived a month after he had been arrested to suit the prosecution. The jury evidently believed him.

The Crown Jewels is a lengthy chronology prepared by Mr Ponting of the background to the *Belgrano* sinking. The thick document bears impressive security classification, much more restrictive even than 'Top Secret'. Each page is stamped TOP SECRET/UMBRA/HVCCO/UK EYES ONLY.

The codewords Umbra and HVCCO are used exclusively in connection with intercepted and decoded signals, handled or processed by GCHQ Cheltenham. Such intelligence is known generally as Sigint (Signals Intelligence)

'DAMNED LIES. . .' ILLUMINATED

THE JURY in the Ponting trial insisted on being provided with copies of the *New Statesman* published last year, including the full text of the Belgrano papers (*NS* 24 August 1984). There was an argument, instigated by the prosecution, about the circumstances in which the Prime Minister had in September 1984 admitted to George Foulkes MP, Belgrano facts which had previously been kept secret. This, protested prosecutor Roy Amlot, was only because the *New Statesman* had already 'blown' the information concerned. Would defence counsel mind reading out that *NS* article to the jury, he asked?

Defending counsel responded amiably. 'Not at all — which passage or article would my learned friend like me to read out?', responded Mr Laughland. He then offered a few suggestions: was it the editorial? or just the documents themselves? He turned to Peter Kellner's column — was it this article that his learned friend wished read, entitled 'Lies, Damned Lies — and Answers to Tam Dalyell'.

The court, and the jury in particular, burst out laughing. The selected readings continued. Finally the jury passed a note to the judge. They wanted their own copies of the issues concerned.

The Ministry of Defence police, it appears, have taken a leaf out of Clive Ponting's book. On Monday, they leaked to the *Daily Mail* a claim that they were still hard on the trail of the *New Statesman* for publishing the Belgrano papers. Sources close to the *New Statesman* say, however, that the MoD police were last sighted on the premises more than four months ago.

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or Comint (Communications Intelligence). HVCCO stands for 'Handle via Comit channels only' — warning recipients that only the safest communications links may be used for such information, lest a target in turn re-intercepts GCHQ's own material.

A few months ago, not even the Attorney-General was allowed his own copy of the Crown Jewels. But during January, Attorney-General Havers and Defence Secretary Heseltine both agreed to risk compromising secret GCHQ intelligence methods and successes for the sake of convicting Ponting. The Defence Ministry's concern for national security was turned on its head for the sake of political expediency.

The Ponting jury was given the *whole* report to study, unedited. In camera, it was taken through it, virtually line by line, by prosecuting counsel Roy Amlot QC, when he questioned Michael Heseltine's Private Secretary, Mr Richard Mottram.

It was an unprecedented move. Never before, in any spy trial or otherwise, has anyone not security cleared and 'indoctrinated' about the ultra-secrecy required on all aspects of Sigint been authorised to see raw GCHQ intercepts.

Sir Michael Havers: didn't need to be told what to do

When Clive Ponting was first arrested, the Crown Jewels were the unknown, virtually complete, utterly secret history of the *Belgrano* sinking. Now it is the best known, most discussed — and most leaked — British top secret document of the decade.

THE CROWN JEWELS make it absolutely clear that the cruiser *Belgrano* never entered the Total Exclusion Zone; that she never sailed for or attempted to attack the Task Force; and that there never was any Argentine 'pincer movement', about which ministers have written and spoken so frequently. The Prime Minister in particular is thereby shown to have lied or deceived the public and parliament on these further, vital aspects of the decision to sink the *Belgrano*.

The 'slippery slope' argument put to the Ponting jury was based on the thesis that the Crown Jewels contain secret intelligence proving that the *Belgrano* was a threat. They do not. GCHQ's intercepts make no reference whatsoever to a 'pincer movement'. Nor do they contain any intercepted order to the *Belgrano* to sail for, or attack the task force.

But the unedited GCHQ intercepts were not sent to the war cabinet. What they got, instead, were 'Intsums' (intelligence summaries) prepared at naval headquarters at Northwood. Here, the reference to a 'pincer movement' does appear. But the Argentine pincer movement never existed, except as a speculative

Sir Tony Hetherington: attended the trial in person

intelligence theory in the minds of *British* naval staff.

There is no evidence that naval intelligence staff deliberately set out to mislead the war cabinet. As it approached the Falklands, the task force was indeed vulnerable; the Argentine aircraft carrier was not sunk on 30 April or 1 May, nor even definitely located. There was no intelligence indicating a pincer movement; but there was no evidence, either, that the *Belgrano* would *not* turn north, towards the task force. There was an Argentinian signal — soon afterwards cancelled — ordering the aircraft carrier to attack the fleet, which created a genuine threat from the north. The possibility of movement northwards by the *Belgrano* was a particular fear of the task force commander, Admiral Woodward, especially after Northwood had invented the worrying 'pincer movement' concept and transmitted its assessment to him.

Admiral Woodward first referred publicly to the 'pincer movement' in October 1982. His words have been repeatedly requoted by the government since. But Woodward was careful not to state it as fact; he prefaced his remarks with a reference to 'all the indications'. Mrs Thatcher has been more careless about the truth. On 19 September 1984, interviewed by Jimmy Young, after she had been immersed in the details of the *Belgrano* affair for six months, she raised intelligence 'theory' to the status of fact. 'We knew', Radio 1 listeners were told, 'there was a pincer movement on the part of the *General Belgrano* group to close on our forces'. No evidence whatsoever supports this assertion.

The Intsum referring to the order to the aircraft carrier, and to the pincer movement, went to Mrs Thatcher and the war cabinet and influenced their decision to authorise the sinking of *all* Argentine warships, anywhere outside territorial waters — not just the *Belgrano*. Mrs Thatcher was clearly ready to authorise the start of the shooting war. On the other hand, all the naval staff knew that from the time the task force had sailed that a major issue was a stake — the reprieve of the Royal Navy's capital ships that had been cancelled the year before in Defence Secretary John Nott's defence review. The Northwood staff were eager to demonstrate the navy's prowess. Before he left the MoD after the war, Mr Nott commented bitterly to colleagues that 'the Admirals have got their fucking floating gin palaces back'.

PERHAPS THE MOST BIZARRE assertion about the Ponting case, this week and last, was the claim by trial judge the Mr Justice McCowan, that the Ponting case was not a 'political trial'. Ponting's leading counsel, Bruce Laughland, who himself sits as a recorder at the Old Bailey, took a very different view: 'It was probably the most political trial this century'.

Ministerial interest in the case was naturally high from the very beginning. The original views of top MoD officials and the Chief Constable of the MoD police, all of whom initially regarded Ponting's resignation as an entirely adequate way of dealing with the matter, were quickly overturned. By the time of last week's trial the senior civil servants and MoD police concerned had 'forgotten' these events when they came to give evidence in Ponting's trial.

Political consideration of the planned course of the trial took place at intervals last autumn and in January, led by the Attorney General and the DPP, often in consultation with prosecution counsel and sometimes with MoD officials. At one stage, it was thought that the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Justice Lane, had expressed an interest in hearing the case personally. But his proper attention to Official Secrets Acts cases, it was later agreed, should be confined to Section 1 — espionage — charges.

The likely and desirable course of the trial was discussed by the same group. It was originally hoped that the trial judge would rule that Ponting had no defence — in effect a direction to a jury to convict. If all went well in securing a conviction — and 'it depends on how Ponting plays it' — then the officials were clear that they desired neither a 'hanging judge' nor imprisonment for Ponting. Another civil service martyr, it was felt, would be most unwelcome. A fine of perhaps £200 (plus dismissal from his job) would be both a dignified and effective outcome from the government point of view.

The chosen judge, selected more than two months before the defence were informed of his identity, was Mr Justice McCowan — a small, tough man, who hitherto has appeared colourless and uncontroversial. Importantly from the point of view of the DPP and the law officers, McCowan was judged last autumn to be a highly appropriate, politically 'sensitive' judge.

McCowan's case list has recently been filled with cases needing such sensitivity, including Clive Ponting's, the Dikko kidnap case, and the London bombings case. This week, he both heard and sentenced the Dikko kidnappers within 24 hours of Ponting's acquittal. McCowan had also been slated to hear the forthcoming Cyprus RAF spy trial, which also concerns Sigint. But opinions about

Contd on p12

Hon Justice McCowan: opinions of his political sensitivity have changed

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UNEMPLOYMENT

I'D SIT TILL I DROP

Camera Press

No one can understand why she's always shopping, never buying anything. Linda Hartnell on real life on the dole in Morecambe

PEOPLE SAY, what do you do with all the spare time? For them 'spare time' is some kind of bonus, like a long vacation. And it is difficult to answer, for after all I am not involved in any exciting creative projects which, laid on the table between us, would prove I am not wasting my life. So I search around the vistas of my long unemployment for possibilities and, one by one, I have to reject them as too vague, too unspecific, too likely to provoke surprised comments and a sidelong laugh of incredulity. As one is often told, 'Oh but you can't read *all* the time; you can't walk *all* the time.' The thing is they want to know, what do you do after that, when you are sitting at home, when you've stopped catching up on the chores or the exercise routine. What is the big thing in your life — the point? And then you have to explain all those insignificant bits and pieces which make up 'the point' — which have to *be* 'the point' because the hub of the wheel went a long time ago. Back once again to another cycle of their incredulity.

It is five miles from where I live to the city centre. I could shop nearer home but if I walk to the city and back again then most of the long haul of the day has gone and I have had fresh air and exercise and actually got outside the front door. Do not underestimate that front door. Sometimes I feel too ashamed of my circumstances, too meaningless, to see any reason why I should or why I am entitled to go beyond it.

Everyone is setting off to school or to work when I leave the house. The traffic is continuous on the main road. Glimpsed from car windows like this on a regular basis I expect most people never think I am not in fact going to work. Sometimes I am able to face the charade — mostly I risk the disused railway track at the edge of the industrial estate because I don't have to look oncoming traffic in the eye. And it is quiet enough to see some rare birds from time to time which I would not otherwise get a chance to see. But, of course, even they have something which gives their life meaning. When the money runs out there is no point in putting my bag over my shoulder or taking my purse except that it holds my keys. No real point in going to the city at all except that it fills up a morning, gets me out of the house.

I have had time to read many more books than maybe I would have had otherwise. I travel into experiences which I cannot have for myself. I have a hunger for a reality that touches me from the pages — that is more real than my own life. I panic when I can find nothing interesting in the library, when I seem to run out of good authors. What will I do with my mind when I am sitting in my room, when I am relaxing?

I cannot afford art materials and anyway, my talents have died. When I do buy crayons or paper an awful frustration sets in — what if I waste the paper? Then it is a waste of money. Guilt grows more and more intolerable. And then when you have the paper and the crayons, when you have the pen and writing paper, what exactly is it you *want* to say? All this time you've been waiting for the chance and now you must not waste it and yet — what is it that is so important now when nothing really seems important any more?

I cannot draw well enough to express anything in proportion to what I *want* to express. If I write about my experience I come up against the fact that basically there is hardly anything left to say. It is not that I do not *have* something to say, but just that so much of it is *about* having nothing, being nothing. It is like talking to people who say, 'But what do you *do* with all that free time?'

WHICH PART of it is free — really free? I used to think poverty made one careful. Now I have all these ridiculous urges to spend, spend, spend, my social security money — to blow one week's whole living on some stupidly irrational and useless piece of jewellery that I will never wear because there is no occasion ahead when I will ever be able to wear it. Things are not going to change. It will not be 'better luck in the future' or 'good luck in the New Year'. These are the shapes now in which a generation is being moulded.

I have tempting urges to steal in these large open-stalled shops where everyone else seems to be spending their money so casually, so easily, so frivolously. Of course I know it is not all frivolous, yet I seem to come up more and more against people who *do* have money, as if the rich *are* getting richer and the poor are fading out of these precincts into the fringe lands of poverty. I feel that if anyone gave me a cheque for £100 I would blow it foolishly in one sweep instead of using it wisely, eking out over months, and then everyone would be contemptuous.

My relatives cannot understand why I am so hard up. They *know* I am not working. But even so, why always *so hard up*? It is absolutely incredible but I just seem never to have any money. If I visit them it is such a damnable nuisance but I seem to be cribbing even about the bus fares or the lunch in a cafe. We visit the shopping centre and what a drag it is when I cannot join in their enjoyment.

But I have stopped looking there. I go on an endless 'crawl' of charity shops. I like them. I enjoy them. I feel rich when I find a good secondhand article and I can actually afford it. But where everything is brand new — well there we are in two different worlds. And then why on earth don't I save up so that I *can* buy what I want for change? It is so inconceivable to them that I never seem to know how to *use* the money I do have. It is also inconceivable to them what it feels like to have 4p in one's purse on a Monday when the Giro only arrives on the Friday after. And then why don't I telephone them more often to keep in touch? No-one suggests reversing charges. The money is gone before they decide to take the number and goodbye has to be said before the shock of hearing my voice has passed.

On the application forms for jobs someone always wants to know about hobbies and clubs and societies. And you have to stretch out what you think you *could* be if you had the chance to have the money to buy the gear or pay the subs or pay the fares to where the free classes are being held. You have to tell them about the concerts or plays or films you would be interested to see and if you're unlucky you have to admit at the interview that in spite of your intense interest in, for example, drama, you have not actually seen a play at the renowned local theatre for three or four years. It does not look good. It does not create the impression you have been striving for.

So you go back to your lifestyle of a few hours before. You maybe watch a little TV if the electricity has not been cut off or if you still have managed to get by without selling the set to raise cash for yourself — or if you've ever been lucky enough to afford one in the first place, and you watch this programme about talented musicians. You see how the winner was awarded a musical instrument from Boosey & Hawks, and you feel bitter because the prodigy had the background which encouraged that talent in the first place. Why, for example, is there no Boosey & Hawks for the little boy or girl belonging to the 'Reed' family who live on the unemployment and supplementary? Simple — no-one knows little Harry or Henrietta has talent and at this rate no-one ever will.

I am growing bitter. I am growing angry. Think what one might be if only there was the chance, the encouragement, the *possibility of a future different* from this one that now faces me. I could be so much more. Who knows, I might be another Mozart or Michelangelo.

So what do I do with my time? I drum my fingers on this secondhand table which I use as a desk and I go through the anger till it turns to despair and then I fill up the time with a walk or some cycling or a book or a record — and it's not even because it is something to do, or that I desperately want to do so much, but because I have to placate the frustration somehow. I have to calm down. I have to soothe myself. Otherwise I will not sleep and then if I sit up late, tomorrow seems such a pointless entity and so meaningless that it seems futile even to go to bed, and I feel I might sit there forever in despair until I drop. □

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McCowan's 'political sensitivity' have now altered rapidly, with both senior legal figures and Mr Bernard Ingham, the Prime Minister's press secretary, making him (with John Stanley) scapegoat for the unwelcome jury verdict. (This may be Mr Ingham's second potential contempt of the judiciary in six months; he has already apologised to the Lord Chancellor for suggesting that a 'Judge Jeffreys' should be selected for the trial.) A spokesperson for Downing Street said on Wednesday that he had 'no comment' to make, but later denied that Ingham had made any such suggestion on behalf of ministers.

The Director of Public Prosecutions, Sir Tony Hetherington, cast other public duties aside and personally attended every day of the trial, bar the last. His presence assumed some importance when the judge decided to give his legal rulings on the case on Wednesday of last week. McCowan indicated that he proposed, in effect, to 'direct the jury to convict'. 'Not in this of all cases', the prosecution pleaded — and sought an urgent adjournment.

The DPP and prosecuting counsel both left the court for an urgent telephone discussion with the Attorney General and returned to urge that McCowan draw back. Ponting's defence had gone far too well for a 'direction to convict' to look like anything other than a political 'fix'. In any case, recent Appeal Court rulings, of which McCowan should have been aware, were that such 'directions' are invalid. McCowan's 'sensitivity' was now privately called into question. Since the jury gave their verdict, many commentators have suggested that the jury's rapid acquittal was in part a reaction against his obvious 'hard line'.

BUT IN ATTACKING the decision to prosecute Ponting, Neil Kinnock has chosen a dangerous battlefield on which to engage the Prime Minister. It is clear now that Mrs Thatcher *has* repeatedly misled MPs and the public about the Belgrano affair (*NS* 2 November 1984). But, on the evidence so far admitted or leaked about the decision to prosecute Ponting, Mrs Thatcher has no case to answer. She has confirmed that she was told about the case just three days after Mr Ponting admitted having leaked. This was after visits by Ministry of Defence officials to brief the Director of Public Prosecutions, and then to brief Michael Heseltine himself. But there is no evidence available that she, or Heseltine, or anyone on their behalf, made any approach to the law officers, who were directly responsible for the decision.

Mrs Thatcher's fierce response to Mr Kinnock on Tuesday suggests strongly either that she *is* telling the truth — or that she is absolutely confident that this time any cover-up will not let her down. Either way, Kinnock's challenge is unlikely to get anywhere unless new evidence soon undermines the Prime Minister's confident stance.

Senior officials, seeking to defend the reputation of the government law officers — Attorney General Sir Michael Havers and Solicitor General Sir Patrick Mayhew — also off the record suggested to the *New Statesman* that it was scarcely neccessary for the Prime Minister to intervene in order to ensure that Ponting would be prosecuted. Government policy on Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act had been changed, emphatically, with the prosecution of Sarah Tisdall for leaking documents to the *Guardian* only a few months before.

Mrs Thatcher had been vigorously in favour of that move. In Ponting's case, her Press Secretary Mr Bernard Ingham, who closely reflect the Prime Minister's views, emphasised Downing Street's enthusiasm for treating Ponting harshly in a meeting of government information officers. He advocated the appointment of a 'hanging judge' to try the case. The law officers did not need to be told what Mrs Thatcher would think about Clive Ponting, or what decision she might favour. 'After Sarah Tisdall', it is claimed on their behalf, 'there was no choice'.

WHITHER now the saga of the *Belgrano*? The House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee has asked for the Crown Jewels to be provided to parliament. It is now quite indefensible for the Ministry to refuse to provide them. A jury has seen the whole document; they were not, apparently, impressed.

When MPs finally read the Crown Jewels, all shades of opinion will draw comfort. Tories and others who backed the military solution to the Falklands will see how the war cabinet was, reasonably in its own terms, led to agree to the Navy's requests. Those who deplore the sinking will see for the first time the depth of the cover-up of mistakes in which the government has been long engaged. Mr Tam Dalyell, sadly, will learn that nothing in it supports — nor, however, does it contradict — his longstanding claim that the government deliberately sank the *Belgrano* in order to scupper a Peruvian peace plan.

If Select Committee members then examine the individual pieces of the Crown Jewels, in conjunction with the major published evidence, they will find that vital pieces of the story are still missing. The issues raised directly by the Ponting trial are more important — but the Belgrano saga is by no means finished. Mrs Thatcher's government has scored a truly historic own goal. □

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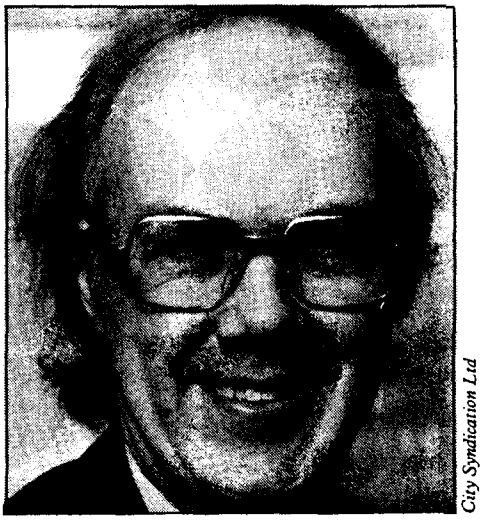
FALKLANDS POLICY

IMPASSE ON NATIONAL PRIDE

Last Saturday, the Liberal Party's council turned down the chance of being the first to break the party paralysis on what to do with the Falklands. Micheal Meadowcroft (below) puts the argument



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EMOTION AND sentiment rightly play a significant role in political thought and practice but can be dangerous and expensive if allowed to dominate over intellectual rigour and practical imperatives. Thus the Prime Minister's 'Not while I'm around' attitude to any discussion of the political future of the Falklands shunts her own Ministers into embarrassing sidings* and endangers the future stability of democracy in the Argentine. Not since the declaration of UDI in Rhodesia twenty years ago has one experienced a similar propensity of senior ex-diplomats and officials to be indiscreet in private about the errors of government policy.

There is, I believe, a broader private consensus on the Falklands issue than exists in public on many other issues. Why then does it not surface? There are three key points of agreement.

Cost. The present military commitment cannot be afforded indefinitely. A million pounds per Falklands family per year is a phenomenal level of expenditure, particularly when personal services in Britain and aid to the developing world are under threat. Even the Falkland islanders themselves, it was stated at the Foreign Affairs Committee, 'do not consider the British public will, in the long term, be prepared to sustain the defence costs indefinitely.' Only the government maintains the pretence of untold finance available to sustain the Fortress Falklands policy.

*See, for instance, Ivan Lawrence QC MP (Conservative, Burton) questioning Baroness Young, Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, Fifth Report, 1983-84, Vol. II.

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Defence priorities. The military commitment in the South Atlantic skews British defence capabilities alarmingly and, what is more, as the Argentine military capability improves, will bias our commitments still further. Dr Paul Rogers estimates that, as of now, 'Fortress Falklands is accounting for more than a quarter of the Royal Navy's entire force of operationally available destroyers and frigates (including) between one-third and one-half of our most modern ships.'

Argentine politics. The current policy provokes and possibly even undermines the Alfonsin regime in the Argentine. It is clear that the elected government in Buenos Aires is committed to securing the 'return' of the Malvinas, albeit by peaceful means. It is hardly a question of practical need — the Argentine is the size of Western Europe with a population less than half that of the United Kingdom — but rather, as Shirley Williams discovered in a visit there, 'a mystical issue in which their national pride is deeply involved.' However much Britain's response was also about a 'mystical' issue, no one can argue that the British people have long nurtured a passionate commitment to the Falkland Islands. It would be of significant assistance to the maintenance of democracy in the Argentine to enable Alfonsin 'to do a deal which it may not be in a position to do later on' as David Watt reported to the Select Committee.

The Prime Minister, alas, allows the legitimate principle of the islanders' rights to obscure the existence of other legitimate principles which infringe on our ability to treat the islanders' wishes as paramount. Not only is the need to enhance political stability in Latin America an important principle but it is also crucial to take into account the future of the 30,000 UK citizens resident in the Argentine (20 times the number in the Falklands).

Furthermore there is a cardinal principle of politics that one should not embark on a course of action that is not sustainable. In the middle of the military conflict the House of Lords debated the crisis and the Liberal peer Lord Hooson made a remarkable speech in opposition to government policy in the course of which he said:

> if we are highly successful militarily Argentina will smart under defeat for years to come; and what about the prospects for the Falkland islanders? What about them? What will happen to them in years to come? Are we as a country prepared to support a big military force down there for a decade or two? Because that is what it might well amount to.

That is what it is amounting to and I sense that public opinion is increasingly aware of the impossibility of it.

IT IS HYPOCRITICAL to put the sovereignty of Gibraltar on the agenda with Spain, and to negotiate with China to hand over Hong Kong but, in an international version of Scargillism, refuse even to discuss it in relation to the Falklands. No wonder the Berne talks hardly got started in July 1984. Bernard Crick, in a brilliant *New Statesman* article on the Falklands (14 May 1982), wrote about 'the curse of sovereignty'. He distinguished between the appearance of reality and reality itself:

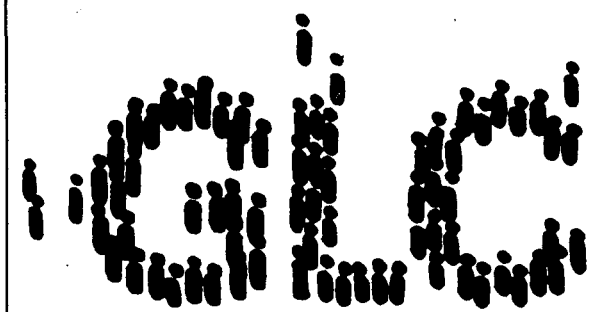
> If the Argentinians will not compromise over sovereignty we had better be aware how meaningless the concept has become. If they want flags and ceremonies, let it be so; all that is unreasonable is if they want to colonise the islands or to govern the islanders the way they govern themselves. The internal form of government of the inhabitants is the most important factor.

The Falklands is one area of policy that needs to be determined on reality rather than by hiding from it.

The Liberal Party tends to have the least hang-ups on the issue of sovereignty and went on record as early as its 1982 Assembly with a resolution urging the UK government to initiate negotiations, including the issue of sovereignty. Alas, even the Liberal Party shrank from developing its policy. Last summer, the party's Latin American Affairs Committee produced a substantial report — *The Falkland Islands, a secure and peaceful future* — which grappled with the sovereignty issue. It listed eight conditions of internal self-government which would enable the UK government to cede sovereignty to the Argentine. A motion, based on this report, was narrowly defeated at the party's quarterly council meeting last Saturday.

The Falklands question will not go away, indeed every month that passes makes a settlement more difficult. It is nonsense for any party, including my own, to debate and agree on the broad principles of a settlement of the political future of the Falkland Islands without recognising that the achievement of those principles means ceding sovereignty to the Argentine. Without that acceptance there will be no negotiations and no solution. □

Michael Meadowcroft is Liberal MP for Leeds West.



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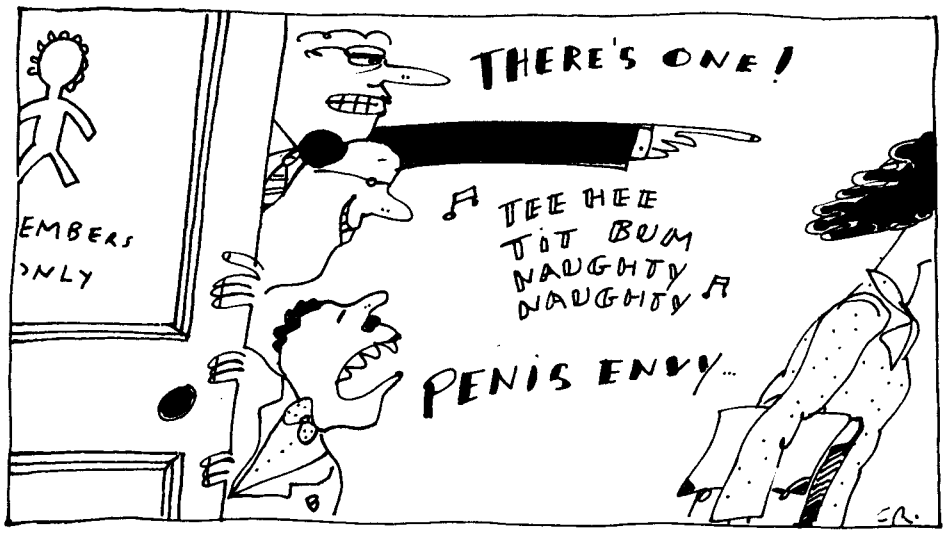

Christine Roche

WESTMINSTER

FOR MALE MEMBERS ONLY

Boys defending their loos, sulking when the girls are allowed to play. That's Westminster, discovers Caroline Rees

'I MUST TELL you about the men's hairdresser', says Labour MP Ann Clwyd, holding her head in mock horror. 'When I went there in the summer — it's supposed to be unisex, but it's not in fact — he said I was the first woman he'd seen for years. It's a men's barber shop actually. I asked him if he'd got a hotbrush, to curl the ends of your hair. And he said "No, we haven't", but he would ask if he could have one.

'I went there again a few weeks ago. He showed me his new possession, and it was this hotbrush. It's about the only new thing he's had there for the last twenty years!'

It does say something about the Palace of Westminster that the chief job of the hairdresser is probably to drape a chap's lock decorously over his balding pate. It's radically different from the European Parliament where there is a *real* unisex hairdresser. 'The House of Commons remains', Barbara Castle believes, 'a monastic establishment'. 'Run by men for men', she says. In their exclusive little world, they view the intrusion of 25 female members — 14 Tory, 11 Labour, no Alliance, as a mildly pleasant diversion, 'a chance to show their gallantry'.

JO RICHARDSON, Labour spokesperson on Women's Rights, could live without the 'gallantry'. 'An MP, who is no longer at the House of Commons, in an affectionate way, ruffled my hair. The next time I saw him I ruffled his three carefully arranged hairs. He never did it again. Really, it's a form of bottom-pinching.'

Former Labour MP Shirley Summerskill was spoken to more often after getting her hair cut than throughout the previous ten years. Barbara Castle remembers 'rushing back to the House with a rather saucy hat on'. Not thinking to remove it, 'I was bewildered to be greeted with a wave of cheers, not for what I was saying, but because of my hat'. Even the indomitable Mrs T. suffered jeers of 'Get your hair done!' when she rose to speak. And the recent glee of Nicholas Fairbairn's claim that a man once sexually propositioned her reveals that, for many men, femininity means a vulnerability which they are delighted to exploit.

With so few women, it is easy for them to be seen as a visual distraction, not serious political colleagues. And that allows men MPs to be blind to the limits of their own male vision and behaviour. Leo Abse, Labour MP for Terfaen, and heavily into his version of psychoanalysis and penis-envy, records his misogynist sentiments in his appropriately titled book *Private Member*:

> They are continuously in protest . . . they demand of the House; they complain and sometimes whine; but surprisingly, they rarely woo the House . . . Are many of our women politicians the little girls who refuse to recognise the unwelcome fact that they lacked a penis . . . exaggerated their masculinity and remain clinging to their earlier masturbatory clitorial activity, albeit displaced into fairly disguised political forms?

Mr Abse was the joint title-holder in the 'Prick of the Week' competition initiated by former Labour MP, Maureen Colquhoun, and colleagues, in the Seventies.

Ann Clwyd accepts that society's chauvinist attitudes are reflected in the claustrophobic gents' club atmosphere of Westminster, with its staff of deferential servants, which exacerbates its maleness. 'It's hard to describe', says Jo Richardson, 'but it smacks of: "We know you're not really up to it, because you're the weaker sex".' Former Labour MP, Helene Hayman, who in Barbara Castle's words 'committed the crime of becoming pregnant after being elected', was forced to stagger through the Division Lobby day after day because the Tories refused to pair her. In fact the late sittings at the House are less because the country needs them, more the product of the needs of men, isolated in London from their children and wives, to have somewhere to while away the evenings.

Harriet Harman, our only MP to have primary responsibility for the care of young children, says it makes her feel like 'a different species.' And the utter unrepresentativeness of Parliament does, she says, make the nation's political agenda 'very macho.' Detecting groans of 'Oh God, here she goes again, on women's issues', Jo Richardson nearly launched herself 'like a cruise missile' at a front bench Tory MP in a recent debate.

TOILETS represent a major grievance (if you leave aside the question of there being around 300 too few women MPs). Toilet stories abound. Men at Westminster, it turns out, are hell-bent on keeping their privvies jealously to themselves. Whilst not knowing precisely what lies behind the doors marked 'Members Only', rumour has it that they even have showers.

'The Lady Members Room I use is absolutely antiquated', says Ann Clwyd. 'The bath has been there for I don't know how long. I don't know when it was last decorated'. How far does she have to go from her shared office? Research assistant Nicky Lewis explains, pointing the way to the nearest Ladies: 'Along there, up the steps, turn left, through St Stephen's, along the corrider . . .' Where do the men go? 'Just round here'. 'Stupid, isn't it? Sometimes, if I'm desperate, I use this one and get a policeman to stand guard outside'. She looks heavenward. Then there's 'Barbara's Castle', one male bastion stormed when Mrs Castle was taken ill in the Division Lobby, and used more recently as a makeshift crêche for Helene Hayman's baby. Naturally, it's far too expensive to install a permanent one, though club recreational facilities, including a shooting range, abound.

In search of the Way Out for somebody just recently, Ann Clwyd came upon a door marked 'Private. Members Only'. On opening the door, she discovered that 'somebody who, from the back, looked like the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms, was occupied. I beat a hasty retreat', she grins.

Half the staff of 3,000 are women, yet there are none of the necessary amenities. The nearest shops, for example, are at the other end of Victoria Street. Nicky Lewis feels strongly about this, given the especially long hours of work at Westminster. 'How many men do you see dashing off to Sainsbury's on a Friday afternoon?' she asks. Perhaps someone else buys their branflakes.

Gladstone, on his plinth in the Central Lobby, would no doubt approve. He said in 1892, that women MPs might 'dislocate or injuriously modify the relations of domestic life'. Britain's first woman MP to take her seat, Nancy Astor, arrived at Westminster 65 years ago. Churchill later told her that he felt 'a woman had entered my bathroom and I had nothing to protect myself with, but a sponge'. 'Sir', retorted the Tory Lady, 'you are not handsome enough to have worries of that kind'. □

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UNIONS

WHATEVER WILL THE PARENTS THINK?

For the second year running, teachers are taking industrial action. Long overdue alliances are being built with other unions, but the NUT faces the threat of the Tory Trade Union Act. Worst of all, will this dispute erode parental support? Barry Hugill reports

A FUNNY thing happened at the TUC conference last September. Fred Jarvis and Fred Smithies, respective general secretaries of the NUT and the NAS/UWT, the two largest teacher unions, appeared together on a public platform for the first time in 15 years. Smithies tried to make a joke out of the venue of their 1969 meeting, a cinema in Slough. The audience couldn't see it, nor could Rodney Bickerstaffe of NUPE, the third speaker that evening.

Bickerstaffe's disapproval of the antics of the two Freds was made clear. The government is determined to break down the State education service, he explained, and the sooner the teacher unions realise that the better. The only hope for the children, the teachers, parents and the army of auxiliary workers in schools, is an alliance of public sector workers. We can't wait another 15 years for that, he declared.

Five months later the possibility of such an alliance is surfacing. Last week's newspapers carried extensive reports of the disruption caused by NUT teachers refusing to cover for absent colleagues. What was not widely reported was that pupils on the Wirral missed school because of industrial action by caretakers.

Later this year the government is intent on introducing legislation forcing local education authorities (LEAs) to put out the school meals service to contract. This will inevitably mean more job losses for dinner ladies and more expensive meals for pupils. There will be further attempts to privatise school cleaning with the consequent loss of caretakers' jobs.

For years now teachers have seen their salaries eroded by inflation and a succession of poor pay settlements. Last year's arbitration award of 5.1 per cent means that a newly qualified graduate teacher receives the princely sum of £6,252 (£7,200 in inner London) and a teacher of 10 years' experience, at the top of scale 2, £9,600 (£10,600 in inner London). Thousands of teachers never reach the heights of scale 2. Having gone all-out for a graduate teaching profession, government pay policy has ensured they don't get a salary commensurate with that status.

But whatever their supposed status, Sir Keith Joseph has constantly argued that teachers' pay reflects the market — there are a lot of graduates around looking for work. To add insult to injury he has embarked on an ambitious 'reform' of the curriculum and the examination system without even the pretence of consulting with the teacher associations, thus really undermining their professional 'control' of their work. During last year's pay negotiations the management side of the Burnham Committee (the forum for pay negotiations) expressed 'concern over the cumulative erosion of professional commitment'.

IT IS IN this context of increasing disillusion that the NUT's decision to start what will be a long campaign of disruption has to be seen. Easily the largest union, it contains a vast number of poorly paid scale I teachers. This is the group with the least prospect of promotion as falling school numbers has led to a drastic decrease in the number of scale 2 and 3 posts. These are the foot soldiers of the classrooms, the young enthusiasts who organise the after-school clubs, who, because they have no 'administrative' responsibilities, have a larger teaching load and who are invariably asked to 'cover' for absent colleagues.

Last year the NUT's annual salary conference took a decision to seek a flat rate £1,200 pay increase. This was a clear victory for the Left in the union and for its natural supporters, the lower scale teachers who have most to gain from an erosion of differentials. It brought them closer to those who believe, with Rodney Bickerstaffe, that teachers have more in common with other lower paid public sector workers than with the professions.

At the moment, NUT members are refusing to cover for absent teachers or to take part in out-of-school activities, but the NUT this week decided to ballot selected local associations on three-day strikes. The NAS/UWT, not to be outdone, has called a half-day strike for 26 February if the management refuses to up its 4 per cent offer. Talks are being held at the TUC with the other public sector unions and come spring, disruption on a scale unseen for years is possible. ▷

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Hard-line local authorities were contemplating legal action under Tebbit's 1984 Trade Union Act alleging that the NUT should have held a ballot before withdrawing cover. Both sides consulted their lawyers as to whether the NUT's action was 'working to contract' or industrial action requiring a ballot under the Act. Tory Solihull was the front-runner but Sheffield and Birmingham were among the Labour authorities considering using the law.

The teachers' leaders have stressed that they will not disrupt examinations. But already some schools are reporting problems meeting the schedule for assessed work on the CSE. As spring comes and children are sent home exam classes are bound to be affected.

The hardliners in the NUT, led by Deputy General Secretary Doug McAvoy, are sticking out for tougher action claiming correctly that this is the desire of the local associations — the 'branches' of the NUT. Although not a left-winger in the conventional sense, it was McAvoy who initiated last year's industrial action during Fred Jarvis's absence on sick leave. He gained considerable 'credibility' with the union activists as a result. Jarvis is likely to be TUC Chairperson next year and will then retire as General Secretary. If this year's industrial action pays off, the NUT can reasonably hope to pick up members and Doug McAvoy will be guaranteed the top job.

Before then, the NUT has to steer a course between holding its members and winning its case with the public. There were mutterings in the staff room last week about the fate of the miners. The public blamed them for the dispute, not the NCB and withheld the degree of support the miners needed to win. Why should the teachers, not known for encouraging friendly relations with parents and community fare any differently?

Early reactions from parents' organisations suggest that, far from building up support the teachers' action is having the opposite effect. Sheila Naybour of the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations said that they fully supported the case for a substantial pay increase: 'But this is the second year running we have had this kind of action and last year we lost a lot of parental support. These kinds of action can be counter-productive in the end and lose teachers the esteem and backing of the community'. Joan Sallis, a well known parent activist, made a similar observation: 'If Mrs Thatcher can eat the NUM for breakfast, she can have the NUT with her morning coffee'. □

'And ever more came out of that same door wherein I went' . . .

This was the plaint of a man who could not escape the common round of conventional answers to his questions. Perhaps he was stuck in beliefs — maybe even sacred ones — but he was stuck. Is there no way out?

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POLICE'S OWN VIDEO NASTY

When the 'Ealing Five' were sentenced to 15 to 17 years in jail for a bank robbery, they strongly protested their innocence. New evidence confirms their case, but after eight years four of them are still in prison. Ivor Gaber takes up the story

IT WAS A GOOD feeling. The prosecution case was shown to have been based on unsound evidence and the prisoners to have been unfairly treated. All that remained was for British justice to assert itself and for the prison doors to swing open. Certainly that's how the programme makers felt last April at the end of an episode of 'Watchdog' on the BBC's now-defunct *Sixty Minutes*.

But today, ten months on, virtually nothing has happened. The case has still not been heard by the Court of Appeal. A Home Office 'investigation' grinds on. And all the prisoners remain very firmly in prison, having now lost a further year's remission as a result of continuing to protest their innocence.

In June 1977 there was a raid on a branch of the National Westminster Bank in West London. Four or five armed men were involved. Later that same day five men were arrested — two local men, James Farrell and Guy Maggioni, and three from Kilburn in North London, brothers Pat and Joe Lee and their brother-in-law, Michael Jones.

All five had long criminal records and, a year later, after a six week trial at the Old Bailey, they were found guilty and received between 15 and 17 years in prison for their alleged parts in the raid.

During both the committal hearings and the trial itself the men, known as the 'Ealing Five', continued to protest their innocence. They tried to wear T-shirts in the dock reading 'not guilty' but were prevented by the magistrates — instead they appeared in blankets. There were fist fights both in court and in the cells below between the five and the police.

They were convicted on the strength of the forensic evidence brought by the prosecution. In particular, the police claimed to have found hundreds of splinters of glass on the clothing and footwear of the five, perfectly matching the glass from a screen in the bank that was smashed in the course of the raid.

The defence argued that the glass had been planted but failed to convince the jury. However, in an interview on the 'Watchdog' programme, Professor Harold Rawson, Emeritus Professor of Glass Technology at Sheffield University, raised serious doubts about both the methods of analysis used by the police scientists who looked at the glass splinters and about the conclusions that they reached.

The police report claimed that all the fragments examined, from both clothing and footwear, were 'clean and sharp' — despite the fact that all five pairs of shoes had been used for walking for a day before the fragments were removed.

Using an electron scanning microscope Professor Rawson established that similar glass fragments walked upon for a similar period of time would be clogged with dirt and have blunted edges. He concluded: 'I think it's very unlikely that these fragments of glass (could) have in fact been in the soles of shoes and been walked on for that period of time'.

MORE SIGNIFICANTLY the programme uncovered evidence which indicated that the police had in all probability tampered with one of the most vital exhibits in the case.

During the committal the police inadvertently revealed that on the day of the robbery Guy Maggioni's house had been under video observation; Maggioni and Farrell were delighted — they were sure that once the tape was played it would show them arriving at the house a few minutes before the robbery took

Brothers Patrick (left) and Joseph Lee (right) and their brother-in-law Michael Jones

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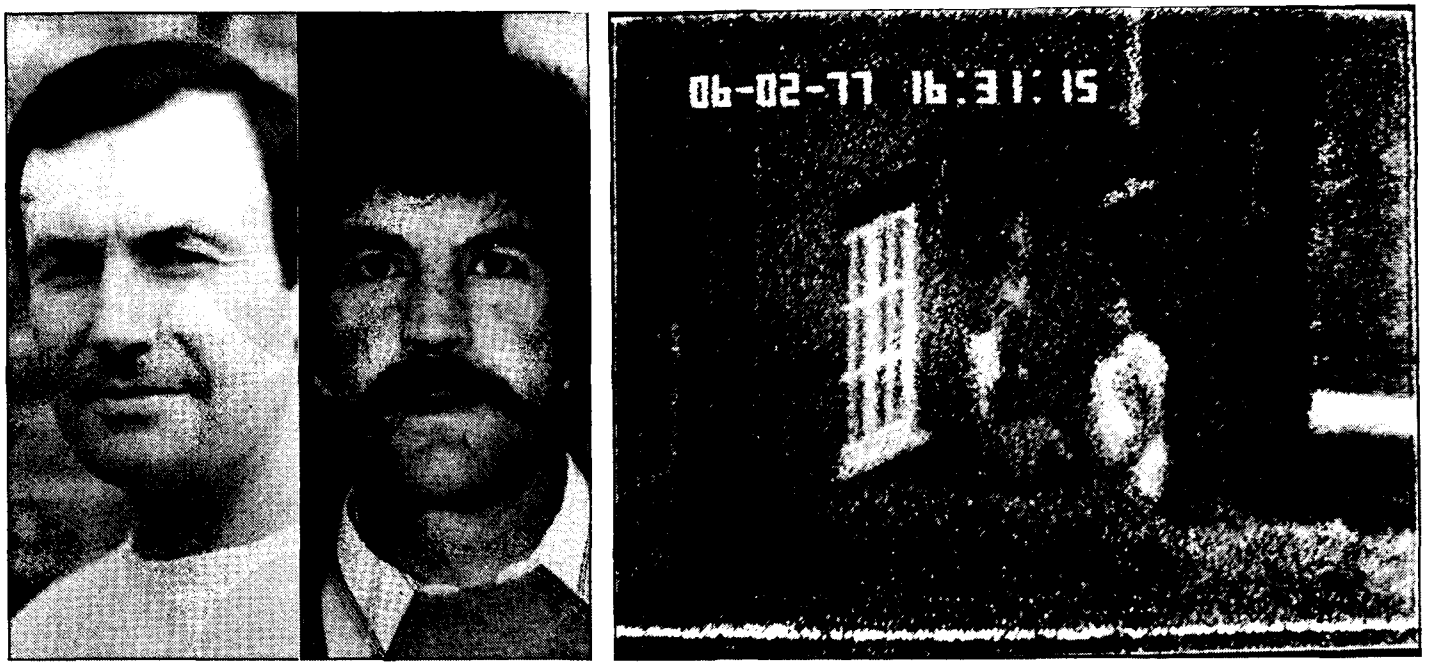

Guy Maggioni (left) and James Farrell (right). Far right, one of the remaining video frames, not completely erased, taken at 4.31 on the day of the robbery when the police claimed no one entered or left the house

place and leaving about 15 minutes later. The timing of the video recording would be clearly visible on a 'date-time generator' that displayed the year, month, day, hour, minute and second of every recorded frame.

But when the tape was shown in court that vital section was missing — according to the police witness a technical mishap had developed at precisely the crucial time on the tape. The prosection put up an 'expert witness', a police photographer, who baffled the court with over 70 pages of video gobbledegook — the defence put up nobody. The judge and jury had no choice but to accept the 'technical mishap' explanation.

However, both a BBC video expert and a former Home Office forensic scientist who examined the tape last year, concluded that there could be no reasonable technical explanation for the mishap and that the tape had most likely been interfered with in order to erase the vital sequences. That conclusion was corroborated by the discovery of several frames of video not completely erased, during the rest of the day when the police claimed that no one entered or left the house.

A week before the programme was due to be transmitted, Scotland Yard (for reasons that are still far from clear) released to the defence an analysis of the tape made in 1980 by Michael Eley, the Metropolitan Police's own video expert. The tape contained 'serious irregularities' which gave 'cause for concern'. He said that despite the police evidence in court, recordings *had* been made at the time when Farrell and Maggioni claimed they were entering and leaving the house, and these recordings had been subsequently edited out.

The glass and the video evidence linked the defendants; for if the video tape had been tampered with — and the evidence for that was overwhelming — and Farrell and Maggioni had not been at the bank, how come they had identical sprinklings of glass on their clothing and footwear to those allegedly found on the clothing and footwear of Pat and Joe Lee and Michael Jones?

The case for an urgent Home Office review and subsequent referral to the Court of Appeal thus seemed irresistible. Indeed, within a month the review had been announced. Then nothing. Every month a Home Office spokesperson would dutifully report only that 'the review is proceeding urgently'. But the signs were that precisely nothing was taking place. Throughout 1984 none of the prisoners or solicitors was interviewed, no additional documents requested, no meetings with the outside video experts and glass professors sought.

Following the programme it was established that the report by Michael Eley had not lain dormant within Scotland Yard but had been sent to the Home Office and the Director of Public Prosecutions four years ago as part of the review of the case undertaken by the Yard's complaints bureau who were looking into the allegations of a 'fit-up'.

Despite the evidence to the contrary Home Office Minister Patrick Mayhew felt able to write, back in 1981: 'I understand the investigating officer has been unable to establish any evidence of intentional erasure of part of the film . . . There are no grounds on which the Home Secretary would be justified in recommending any interference with (these convictions), or in taking any other action.'

AN APPEAL to the Home Office was not the only course of action open to the prisoners. They all had highly experienced lawyers. Yet none of them has managed to find a way through the morass.

Their first difficulty was in weighing up how long they could reasonably give the Home Office's so-called review before seeking to make their own representations to the Court of Appeal. Eventually, towards the end of the summer, a consensus emerged that further waiting was futile.

They then discovered to their amazement that although the case was only six years old and the defence had indicated that an appeal was under active consideration, all the shorthand notes relating to the trial had apparently been destroyed. The explanation initially given was that the court shorthand writer had shortly after the trial 'fallen off a horse' and subsequently destroyed all the notes. Yet there was always more than one shorthand writer on duty at any one time. The explanation was later changed — they had been destroyed as part of a routine clearing-up operation of old shorthand notes.

According to the Lord Chancellor's Department court notes more than five years old are destroyed, unless an appeal is under way. Whilst it is true that five years covers the statute of limitations for criminal matters it takes no account of the fact that evidence may emerge throwing new light on a case at any time. It appears to imply that prisoners serving longer sentences have no hope of proving their innocence after five years.

In this case the defence solicitors sought to recreate the judge's five-day summing-up from barristers' and solicitors' notes taken at the time of trial. Mid-way through this process they were advised that one and a half days of the summing-up had somehow survived the 'routine' destruction process. What remained to be done was to obtain the agreement of the prosecution that the rest of their summing-up represented a fair version of what the judge actually said.

The leading prosecuting counsel says he is unable to give his assent to the summing up; since he had no notes with which to make a comparison he could add nothing useful. Whether the Appeal Court will consider the defence version of the summing-up adequate remains to be seen. An Appeal Court judge will take the decision on 20 February. If the reconstructed summing-up is not considered acceptable, the Lord Chancellor's Department say they have 'no idea' as to the next step since the case is without precedent. Meanwhile, through absolutely no fault of their own, the men remain in prison without even having reached the Court of Appeal.

HARDLY SURPRISINGLY, their mental and physical well-being is deteriorating under the strain. After seeing the programme they

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were confident that they'd be out within weeks. As time has dragged by with no progress being made their morale has understandably slumped. Of the four men still inside (Guy Maggioni was paroled last year on 'compassionate grounds') Michael Jones has perhaps fared the worst. For no apparent reason, he was until recently a category A top security prisoner. He has a wife and two children waiting for him and the strain on him has been understandably severe.

He, and his fellow prisoner at Long Lartin in Worcestershire, James Farrell, have been refusing to work since the broadcast. They claim they are unable to do the necessary research on their case if they have to go to the prison workshops by day and try and work on their appeal in the evening since the recreation periods are very noisy. As a result they've been in the prison's segregation unit since last Spring and have each lost a year's remission as punishment. The National Council for Civil Liberties is now looking into their case on the grounds that, by denying them the time to work on their case the Home Office, the ultimate authority, is putting the defence at a fundamental and unfair disadvantage.

FARRELL has no regular visitors and has to deal with a sense of total isolation, a feeling that no one is fighting his corner other than himself. Pat Lee is in Wandsworth. He doesn't have the problem about working — in Wandsworth such is the over-crowding that no one works. But he faces the constant battle against depression and hopelessness. However, like his fellow defendants he is resourceful; it was through his initiative that Professor Rawson was first brought into the case.

His brother Joe Lee, currently in Wormwood Scrubs, has been given permission by the Governor not to work until his appeal has been resolved. But Joe Lee has other problems — ever since his conviction he's been on Category A, the category for high risk prisoners, despite the fact that he's never sought to escape and his record is different from any of his co-defendents. He is deeply disillusioned and unless something happens soon his morale will continue to wane.

No one emerges from this saga with much credit. The legal system has shown itself to be inefficient to the point of negligence. The prison authorities have, with a few exceptions, acted spitefully and inhumanely. Members of Parliament who have come to see the basic injustice in the case have, with the odd exception, taken no initiatives.

But in spite of all the setbacks and demoralisations the prisoners have maintained a constant flow of letters to MPs, pressure groups, newspapers and anyone else who would listen. And throughout the eight years of their imprisonment, Michael Jones's wife Betty — who is also Pat and Joe Lee's sister — has fought a one-woman battle to secure the release of her family. She's been the only link that her husband and brothers, and for that matter Jimmy Farrell, have had with the world outside. Undeterred by brush-offs she has maintained the pressure to stop the case from being conveniently forgotten. It's been an eight-year battle which has brought new evidence, new publicity, but no new moves from the Home Office. □

Raise your voices for the Big Screen

Mandy Merck

THE *NEW STATESMAN* isn't known for its coverage of cinema culture, so this column must ask readers to take note of threats to a national resource they may scarcely have heard of — the British Film Institute's Production Division. The parlous fortunes of the mainstream industry are more familiar in this Year of British Film — also the year in which capital allowances on film production and the Eady Levy on ticket sales are to be abolished and the National Film Finance Corporation privatised. You may not care for the recent revival of Oscar-winning exports subsidised by these provisions (synthesisers over as David Puttnam, Dickie Attenborough and soon David Lean approach the podium in striving slow motion). But the effects of their loss could also cripple that flourishing sector which makes most of this country's socialist, feminist and experimental movies.

The BFI can lay claim to the first directorial efforts of Karel Reisz, Lindsay Anderson, Stephen Frears, Chris Petit, Peter Greenaway and Bill Douglas. But its 35-year history has also fostered collective and individual work more celebrated for its ideas than its authorship. Recent productions like *Riddles of the Sphinx*, *Song of the Shirt*, *Journeys from Berlin*, *At the Fountainhead*, and *The Gold Diggers* have challenged film-goers' notions of history and sexuality, documentary and fiction, in a decade of innovative work for which the Institute has been both abused and admired in this country and much envied elsewhere. Meanwhile, glossier BFI projects like *Ascendancy*, *The Draughtsman's Contract* and the forthcoming *1919* go on winning festival prizes and Fleet Street plaudits while lavishly supplying the art houses' insatiable demand for costume, period detail, theatrical acting and an aura of sexual sophistication.

In the face of this success comes the Government's determination to cut arts subsidy to below the level of inflation and stop funding film production altogether. Confronted with below-standstill budgets across the Institute, an end to Eady revenues currently running at about £180,000 per year and the reluctance of the Independent Television companies to continue their modest subsidy to BFI productions while financing Channel 4, the Production Division is, according to BFI Director Anthony Smith, 'in very real jeopardy'.

Its demise would remove about a million pounds annually from the total subsidy to non-commercial production in this country. Even on the ludicrously small scale of British arts subsidy, this seems a tiny sum. (Recent controversy has disclosed that the annual upkeep on the National Theatre runs over twice that amount before they open a script.) But last year those million pounds represented about a seventh of the annual total available to non-commercial cinema in Britain. This year, with the proposed abolition of the metropolitan county councils and their £2½ million annual subsidy towards local film-makers, it would count for something like a quarter. The remaining cans of film must be carried by the tiny budgets of the Regional Arts Association and the Regional Production Fund (themselves clients of the BFI); the Arts Council; and Channel 4's Commissioning Editor for Independents, Alan Fountain.

Mention of Channel 4 at this point usually introduces a note of optimism, since both Fountain and Chief Executive Jeremy Isaacs have served on the BFI Production Board. But even if Fountain's overstretched £2 million per year could be enlarged by 50 per cent or more to accommodate the work of the Production Division, the result might not be in the best interests of radical cinema.

In the first place Channel 4 lacks even rudimentary accountability in its selection of projects to back. The Production board includes, for instance, a delegate from the Independent Film and Video Makers Association while the metropolitan councils are far more open. Secondly, the Channel *is* television, not cinema. Two and a half years of its late-night *Eleventh Hour* slot may have introduced film-makers to audiences beyond their wildest dreams (about 450,000 viewers in the average rating). But even telephiles like myself have to agree that TV's separation of producer from viewer, and viewers from one another, tends to take the social out of socialist, rendering political *exchange* almost impossible.

As other European countries have long realised, a national cinema without an enormous domestic audience like those of India or the US must receive more than ticket prices to make films. This is the iron law of the market which has forced British governments to intervene on behalf of national production since 1927, when the Cinematographic Films Act brought in quotas for the minimum proportion of British films to be exhibited. It is the economic reality which has led Puttnam and Co to oppose this current government's withdrawal of all current subsidy to the industry in the Films Bill (a battle now lost) and to clamour for a levy on video tapes (still a possibility). Perhaps it's time for the Left to dust off their chariots, bows or whatever comes to hand, in defence of the last remaining sources of cinema subsidy in this country. □

For a useful summary of British film policy, take a look at the new *Cinema and State: the Film Industry and the British Government 1927-84*, written for BFI Publications by Margaret Dickinson and Sarah Street.

Mandy Merck is the editor of Screen.

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DIARY

Princeton

Well here I am in a Jumbo jet entering these words into a neat, lap portable word-box: the PX-8, which Epson lent to me for 'evaluation' while in the States. It even has a Wordstar chip plugged in. I've also borrowed a printer, which is about the size of the Penguin edition of *War and Peace*, only a lot lighter. I've worked out how to configure them, and have already printed out the first version of this item here on the plane. The printer, a P-40, issues forth on what I call thermal lavatory paper. It would be much easier to send the diary down the phone. But although the *New Statesman*'s very own word-boxes have at last been ordered, the world of Easylink or Telecom Gold seems a good few months away. So the thermal lavatory paper will have to wing its way back, in an envelope.

○

Meanwhile, a traveller's tip: breast feed babies on take-off and landing. So far, at least, it's worked again on take-off. The sucking looks after the changes in air-pressure and stops that painful popping of the ears that makes the wee bairns howl. But no one has yet devised a way of avoiding the screening of inflight movies, this side of sleep. We have just been subjected to some frightful trash: *The Last Starfighter*. There was no need for the ear phones my elder daughter demanded — and got. We were put forward because of the children and in the darkened plane human faces were liquidated, monstrous bodies exploded and there was a carnage of zapped space ships. Described as 'Light-hearted in flight entertainment', it was just what we needed at 30,000 feet as a prelude to Reagan's America. The seven-year-old has promptly declared she will have nightmares, because it was 'good but scary'.

○

I pick up my lap portable and carry on, now that we have had a few days to settle in. One knows that one is in America because of the noise. Even the most insignificant message is tannoyed at top decibel, with unavoidable precision and nasal drag. When you get in a car, the seat-belt warning blares instantly. Indeed, until you are used to it, it almost blasts you out of the vehicle before you have shut the door. In New York people shout out loud even when talking to themselves. Of course, the US has its strong points. Here disposable nappies are absorbent, which can make a big difference to the quality of life. Also the meat is wonderful, positively leonine. We went straight off to the Acme supermarket, got some huge slabs of steak to cook with European gusto. At the local, small-town health food store I asked if they had some garlic. 'Sure, garlic capsules', came the reply. I couldn't believe it, until I looked around. Most of the shop was an array of bottles; every vitamin, and anything else that could be purified into pills, was there for the popping. Cloves are, like nature, unhealthy in America. We went back to our steak, it smelt delicious, but just as we were about to eat, the smoke of good cooking proved too much for the apartment. The built-in fire alarm went off, with an ear-wrenching wail and wouldn't stop until we had opened all the windows.

○

Another positive aspect of US food is the sugar packet. I was delighted to read Roger Scruton just before leaving. He used his column in *The Times* to eulogize the red telephone box whose promised demise I welcomed in my last diary. Here, surely, is a key ideological divide. For Scruton they smell only of 'stale cigarette ash and rusting iron', they are a 'fitting representative of stable government', their embossed crown a 'symbol of national identity and promise of enduring government'. Quite so. Similarly, I now realise, with the British sugar packet. Hard to open, impossible to pour except into a large dish and full of wasted sugar that rattles in its paper creases, it is also prone to rapid hardening in damp conditions. In America, just as in France, sugar comes in cartons that have a simple metal lip which can be pulled down to pour from. So next time you try to shake out a packet of Tate & Lyle and get just enough crunchy sugar on the table to have to clear it up, think of it as an enduring symbol of a national way of life.

ROGER WODDIS

Two fingers times twelve

Who made a cock-up?
'I', said the Leader,
'Thought we'd fix the bleeder,
I made a cock-up.'

Who put the knife in?
'I', said the Stanley,
'Though it wasn't manly,
I put the knife in.'

Who wanted blood?
'I', said the Warrior,
Who is feeling sorrier,
'I wanted blood.'

Who set the trial?
'I', said the Havers,
'With no thought of favours,
I set the trial.'

Who shoved the Jury?
'I', said the Judge,
'But they wouldn't budge,
I shoved the Jury.'

Who told the truth?
'We', said the Triers,
Who were bloody liars,
'We told the truth.'

And the crowds in the street,
Who had found their betters wanting,
Threw their hats in the air
When they freed the Ponting.

○

Which brings me to New Zealand lamb. 'Out of the blue', this small, far away archipelago that few here have heard of, while even fewer know where it is, has delivered a rebuff to mighty America ... sounds like war to me. In Washington, the hawks want to dump their stockpile of frozen lamb on the world market, to punish the New Zealand economy. The State Department has linked the matter to the European peace movements, saying that it is essential to show that 'the course these movements advocate would not be cost-free'. 'We believe that alliances require interaction of military forces and equitable burden sharing,' its spokesman said. Meaning that a country is not even allowed to know if US nuclear weapons are in its harbours. The Labour leadership in Britain understandably wants to negotiate the removal of US nuclear bases from its soil. The New Zealand example shows that the US will simply refuse to negotiate at all. Equitable interaction should leave some room for manoeuvre, though. For example, Britain might ask to be paid for the heavy burden of looking after the fences.

○

Watching President Reagan's State of the Union address to the joint houses of Congress brought back memories of Nixon's final such appearance, which I also watched live, not on TV but in the flesh. Perhaps the flesh is the wrong word. We all knew it would be for the last time. The previous evening I'd been to an impeachment ball, where I was startled by the lifelike Nixon masks worn by various revellers. My part of the public gallery was packed with cheering White House supporters, who glowered starchly as I refused to applaud. When Nixon himself appeared, pressing the flesh of Congressional supporters, he was so heavily made up, and so strained, he seemed far less real — even less 'himself' — than his masked tormentors. At least there was a tension between appearance and reality. I never thought I'd look back to it with a sense of loss. But with Reagan all sense of the real has evaporated. The rallying cry with which he won the election was 'You ain't seen nothing yet'. It appeared to promise that in his next four years America really would see something. Who noticed its delphic character, its double-sided promise: that for the very first time, we really might see *nothing*?

Islander

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MORE FALL-OUT STILL TO COME

The Australian Royal Commission into British nuclear tests is painstakingly uncovering layers of lies and cover-ups. Robert Milliken reports on its findings to date

WHEN RUMOURS started going around in 1954 that Britain might conduct some atomic weapons tests in Canada rather than Australia, the Australian prime minister at the time, Robert Menzies, almost had apoplexy. Menzies, the last of the Queen's men to rule Australia, had to be placated by the British and assured that the rumours were false.

With Menzies, it was a case of 'be our guests: we'll ask you no questions if you tell us no lies'. As a cable to Whitehall from the British High Commission in Canberra in August 1954 put it: 'I think (Menzies) is personally favourably disposed to the idea and would welcome the prospect of continued collaboration between the United Kingdom and Australia. I felt it best to use discretion . . . and scotch any suggestion that we had been thinking of Canada as an alternative'.

One reason British scientists ruled out Canada as an atomic test site was the climatic conditions in uninhabited areas. But, as the Australian Royal Commission into the tests has been hearing over the last five weeks in London, the climate was no better in the Australian outback. Radio-active clouds drifted inexorably across inhabited areas after the tests.

The inquiry has taken evidence from more than 120 witnesses since it began its hearings in Australia four months ago. At least 20 more people, including British scientists and veterans from the 20,000 British servicemen involved in the 1950s tests, are due to be questioned in London over the next few weeks.

Since the London hearings began early last month, they have unearthed several revelations which have been crucial to the commission's investigations. They go a long way towards its expected finding that for the past 30 years British and Australian governments have been culpable of an extraordinary cover-up.

● Despite repeated British and Australian claims that the tests in Australia were limited to atomic devices, at least two of them — codenamed Mosaic and Antler — involved triggering devices for Britain's hydrogen bomb. This admission came from none other than Lord Penney, the British scientist in charge of the tests. At one point, a communication between the British and Australian prime ministers stressed that a public announcement must not refer to thermonuclear tests. (The commission's brief is limited to the atomic tests at three Australian sites — the Monte Bello islands, Emu and Maralinga — and does not cover Britain's hydrogen bomb tests at Christmas Island in 1957.)

● One atomic test in 1953, codenamed Totem One, appears to have been made in precisely the climatic conditions which a scientific report months earlier had warned would produce a maximum danger from radioactive fallout. A

The Photo Source

Dr (now Lord) Penney, left with Adm. Torlesse after the Monte Bello test, 1952

Deputy Director of the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston told the Commission this week he believed this bomb should not have been fired because the climatic conditions at the time were too risky.

● Two bombs were detonated at the Mosaic trial, but there was much internal bickering about whether the second one was really necessary. With a yield of 60 kilotons, it was almost twice the explosive force of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bomb combined. Some experts at the time claimed privately that this bomb was a waste of £4 million.

● The safety regulations which British scientists drew up for workers involved in the first tests allowed for higher maximum doses of radiation than did those of the Americans, who had tightened their rules only two years earlier as a result of tests in the late 1940s.

MOST STARTLINGLY, a former radiological safety officer with the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston described last week how recordings of ground contamination taken from aircraft after the Mosaic tests underestimated by 10 times the actual contamination levels.

James Hole, who took credit for suggesting to the AWRE the need for such aerial surveys, said he had later discovered that the measurements recorded in the aircraft had to be multiplied by 10 in order to measure the proper contamination on the ground. The commission will be probing further into this disclosure, particularly the extent, if at all, to which such discrepancies were corrected in official records of the tests. Certainly the Atomic Weapons Test Safety Committee, the Australian body set up before the Mosaic trials, used the records as the basis for press releases at the time, assuring Australians that there was nothing to worry about.

The inquiry, in pokey hearing rooms in St James's, has taken on the air of a prolonged inquest. There is no corpse, only a legacy of a political and military decision taken in the utmost secrecy more than 30 years ago. The scientific and military witnesses, many now in their seventies, are wheeled up to the witness box where they are prodded and coaxed by a brace of lawyers half their age. But try as they may, these eminent gentlemen simply cannot remember all the details; it was too long ago and, more often than not, it was someone else's responsibility.

The caustic, suavely dressed judge presiding over the proceedings is Mr Justice James McClelland, 69, a former Labor party member of the Senate, the upper House in Canberra, and himself steeped in the politics of the 1950s. This is due to be McClelland's last judicial job before retirement. It is said he is keen not to leave behind a whimpering report as his memorial.

Already the commission's hearings have put the finger on the British government. James Hole, for instance, has said that while the men at Mosaic wore film badges to record their radiation exposures, there was never any compulsory order for them to do so. Most people wore their badges on the lapel; a more accurate measure would have come from the waist, to take account of the higher concentrations of some forms of radiation in the gonads. Hole himself suffered a massive dose: he was sent into the bomb crater soon after the second Mosaic blast, and described it as 'very pretty, like a skating rink!'

IT WAS ALWAYS known that the real story of the atomic tests lay in the documents buried in British archives. The question of access to them threatened to blow up into a major diplomatic row. Mr Justice McClelland's uninhibited bout of pom-bashing at the opening London session last month, over Britain's reluctance to co-operate, appears to have worked as a tactic in shaking many relevant documents loose. After all, the judge had nothing to gain from staying silent. The willingness of the QC for the British government, Robin Auld, to encourage declassification of documents from Aldermaston, which the commission called for, has expedited the process. As Auld has pointed

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The Photo Source

Clouds drift after atomic bomb tests at Monte Bello

out, Britain released more documents in 10 days than the Australian government produced in six months. Many arrived in an avalanche, giving lawyers little time to prepare for witnesses. Yet some secrets remain locked up, particularly on the design of the 1950s bombs, which some Australian counsel argue they still need to know in order to determine the true nature of the fallout.

One of the most controversial focuses of the inquiry has become the test at Emu, in South Australia in October 1953 — codenamed Totem — at which two bombs were exploded. The first, Totem One, is thought to have produced a mysterious black mist which engulfed tribal Aborigines in the nearby desert, some of whom later died or became seriously ill. The facts now emerging about Totem One typify the way much of the history of the trials is undergoing rapid revision.

A Ministry of Supply document prepared five months before Totem One, and released to the commission, engagingly described the bomb as 'an atomic gadget' which was expected to yield about five kilotons. In fact, the bomb was twice this strength. The document warned that the risk of ground contamination from fallout would be greatest if the bomb was fired under steady wind conditions, with wind in the same direction at all levels of the mushroom cloud.

Another document, prepared after the Totem trials, also declassified in the last few weeks, reported that precisely these conditions applied when Totem One was fired. During his four days in the witness box, Lord Penney came under intense questioning on this from Peter McClellan, the Sydney barrister assisting the commission, and Geoff Eames, the counsel for the Aborigines. Despite Penney's intractability, the following exchange makes it clear what the commission has concluded about Totem:

> **McClellan**: Lord Penney, can I suggest to you that the decision to fire Totem One was made when there was a considerable risk known to you of the possibility of certain contamination falling to the ground within 150 miles of Ground Zero?
> **Penney**: I would not agree with you.
> **McClellan**: I also suggest to you that Totem One, in the conditions available at the time, should not have been fired.
> **Penney**: Again, I would not agree.

Yet Ronald Siddons, now a Deputy Director of the AWRE at Aldermaston, was more rueful than Penney when he was questioned this week. Siddons was a mathematician involved in measuring gamma radiation doses from the Totem blasts, and a co-author of the report which forecast how the Totem One bomb would behave. He disclosed in evidence that this report actually underestimated by three times the fall-out level. 'I believe that it was unduly risky to proceed with Totem One at the time it was fired,' he said. 'If I had been asked at the time, my advice would have been not to run the risk.'

It would now appear that at least two of the tests, Mosaic and Buffalo, both in 1956, were hastily mounted operations. Mosaic involved testing triggering devices for thermonuclear weapons in preparation for the full-scale hydrogen bomb tests at Christmas Island the following year. Churchill's government in 1954 had decided to obtain the H-bomb, arguing it would help maintain Britain's status as a world power. Maralinga, the permanent test site Britain was building in South Australia, would not have been ready until late 1956. So Australia was asked for permission to conduct the Mosaic trials in April that year on the Monte Bello islands instead.

Churchill sent a personal message to Menzies: 'You know well the importance we attach to speediest development of efficient nuclear weapons and of great part they can play in interest of Commonwealth strategy . . . It would, of course, be made clear in any public announcement that explosions were atomic and not thermonuclear'.

1956 was the year of Suez and Hungary, with a moratorium on atmospheric testing in the offing. Lord Penney himself has told the commission that by 1956 the military were planning for the real possibility of nuclear war. Were the tests, he was asked, based on political necessity, that is, get the weapon as fast as possible? He replied: 'I would not deny that. But it was not, "Get it as fast as possible — regardless".'

Penney has also partly explained the rationale behind experiments in Australia of detonating bombs at different heights — from aircraft, on towers and on the ground: 'The military, as I keep stressing, were thinking about nuclear war and in nuclear war the weapons would be to attack the enemy and do as much harm to him as possible; and a ground burst was a very likely way. They dump the stuff all round and if, in combat, there are men to be attacked a ground burst will dump stuff on them and it will be in military terms a successful explosion'.

Yet underlying the whole affair was Britain's delicate political bid to be taken back into Washington's confidence, having been frozen out of America's nuclear secrets some years earlier. Australia's demand for more information about the tests as they progressed always took second place to this. During negotiations to set up the Maralinga test site in 1954, London told the British High Commissioner in Canberra:

> Australians are unlikely to be content indefinitely with limited information given to them in the past and may insist on being given fuller information, for example, on the form and manufacture of weapons. As things stand today, this would certainly create difficulties with United States, but American attitudes towards exchange of atomic weapons information with Allies is beginning to change . . .
> In the meantime you should be cautious about any approach from the Australians on this question since we do not wish to prejudice closer collaboration with Americans in this field.

It is interesting that no veteran Whitehall mandarins have been called to give evidence so far. That, one suspects, is where the real shots were being called then. Meanwhile, the British government, having been forced to take the commission seriously, is expected to argue that Britain observed all safety precautions known at the time. The question is whether McClelland's final report moves or embarrasses the government enough to make it change its mind on the question of compensation to the veterans of these tests. □

This England

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□The Prime Minister agreed last night that it was not necessary for subjects of positive vetting to be asked for their views on her. — *Guardian* (J. Woodhouse)

□Whether one agrees politically with the Prime Minister or not, the truth of the matter is that Margaret Thatcher is a beautiful woman. She is not only good to look at purely as a biological specimen of the English rose, if you like, she is also always attractively turned out. Many of us with her workload, worries, stresses and strains — even if dominant animals by our very nature — would find it extremely hard to beat her in a media-political beauty contest. — Letter in *Fife Courier and Advertiser* (Mrs Rachel M. Simpson)

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PEACE AND/OR FREEDOM

Rachel Adams reports on an East-West meeting of peace groups 40 years after Europe was divided up at Yalta

ANYONE CONCERNED with war and peace must feel somewhat overloaded with anniversaries this year. Forty years have passed since the liberation of Auschwitz, the bombing of Dresden, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the end of the Second World War and the Yalta conference.

The trouble with such dates is that not only are they occasions to mourn the dead or celebrate 'peace' and 'freedom', but they provide political capital. What dates you mark and how, whose deaths you mourn — how you define peace and freedom — the Yalta conference is particularly overlaid with so much varying symbolism that it might be easier for peace activists to ignore it altogether rather than be seen in the wrong 'political set'. No one, after all, wants the peace issue to be confused with President Reagan's call for the roll back of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe or to identify with a call to remember the victims of Yalta from someone like Winston Churchill, MP, who shows no interest in today's victims of Turkish militarism, for example.

In spite of these anxieties, an informal network of individuals and representatives from some Western peace movements and independent peace movements and human rights movements from the East met in West Berlin last weekend. It was a seminar to discuss 'Peace in a divided Europe, 40 years after Yalta'. The network was initiated at the European Nuclear Disarmament Convention in Perugia in 1984 to facilitate the communication, translation and discussion of letters and documents passing between such groups.

The event contrasted markedly with the END Convention in Perugia in its lack of hostility and confrontation in the discussions. Partly this had to do with structure — small workshops on a limited and clearly defined theme in rooms where participants could see each others' faces. More important, this was not a media event and, unlike last year, there was a consensus among those attending that the East European human rights and independent peace movements were *bona fide* participants.

What the seminar *exposed* was that there was little consensus beyond these points, either over the interpretation of historical events or over how to deal with the present reality. Mihailo Markovic of the Praxis Community in Yugoslavia, for example, saw Yalta as one step in a historical process that began with Western rejection of the Bolshevik revolution. The possibility of an alliance and collaboration across ideological lines was missed because mutual confidence had already been destroyed. Far from seeing the satellite states as 'victims of Soviet imperialism', in his view — with the exception of Poland and Yugoslavia — these countries had either actively collaborated or offered minimal resistance to the Nazi regimes.

This contrasted markedly with the Polish view, best expressed in a written contribution by David Warzawski of KOS, that Yalta was 'an unjust and unjustifiable betrayal of Poland', which has coloured Poland's attitude to the East and West ever since. Mary Kaldor of Sussex University, among others, expressed the view that Yalta was the acceptance of established military reality — the presence of the allied armies — and that the Cold War is about their continuing presence. The one area of general agreement was that Yalta symbolised the problems of three politicians — Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill — deciding the fate of millions of people without consideration, a process which continues to this day.

The weekend also underlined how views still differ over priorities between East and West. From Poland, former KOR leader Jacek Kuron's view (in a taped contribution) was that, in treating the superpowers equally, the Western peace movements failed to understand the nature of totalitarianism. He thought that all partial arms limitation agreements gave an advantage to the Soviets and that the only effective 'control of agreements' is 'control by society'. While not accepting it, he saw the arms race as 'indispensable until such control exists'.

While Wojcieck Lamentovicz, law professor at Warsaw university and Solidarnosc member, did not agree with this view, it was clear that 'unilateralism' in the West is still viewed with deep suspicion in the East. Dieter Esche of the Ost-West Dialogue group in West Berlin thought this was mainly due to the Western peace movements' failure to explain the process clearly — as one that contained positive possibilities for Eastern Europe as well. Eastern Europeans must be shown that, if they believe nuclear weapons guarantee their freedom, they are already in the trap of totalitarian thinking.

Mary Kaldor thought that the definition of unilateralism in the West had in fact changed from the simplistic demand for arms reduction of any kind in the hope of some reciprocation to something that had more importance as a *political* symbol. The demand for a unilateral step should be seen as a declaration of independence, our rejection of the concept of balance, of the division of Europe and of Cold War thinking.

THERE HAS ALSO been a definite change in attitude to the Western peace movement in Czechoslovakia. It started in 1981 with the correspondence between END and Charter 77. 1982 saw attempts by Charter to spread these ideas. By 1983, with the Warsaw Pact's counterdeployment of missiles it was noticeable that 77 per cent of those signing anti-missile petitions were not Chartists. As Jan Kavan, director of Palach Press, pointed out, people saw a connection between nuclear weapons deployment and their own domestic situation; also, as a result of the effectiveness of the government's own peace offensive in pointing out the dangers of cruise and Pershing deployment in Western Europe, the Czechoslovak people found these arguments applied equally well to their own situation.

The two Chartists, Dr Sabata and Jiri Hajek, ex-foreign minister under Dubcek, in taped and written contributions respectively, made the most concrete proposals as to what such a strategy could be: that the Helsinki Final Act 'offered the peoples of Europe the opportunity of establishing peace free from dependence on the balance of fear.' Not only does the Final Document recognise the sovereign equality of states and stress their duty to refrain from the threat or use of force, and to solve disputes by peaceful means, but it also asserts the principles of respect for territorial integrity and the inviolability of frontiers, as well as the rights and freedoms of individuals.

The Helsinki Document thus went a long way towards specifically enunciating the idea of the 'indivisibility of peace'. Its authoritative text affirms that true peace is not merely the absence of war: it has a positive meaning which includes not only respect for the rights of states,

Bishop in the dock

THE SOUTH AFRICAN government's attempt to silence opposition will be highlighted again this week when Archbishop Denis Hurley (above), President of the Southern African Catholic Bishop's Conference, appears in court on charges under the sweeping 1958 Police Act.

The trial, which was postponed in October until 18 February, has drawn international condemnation and concern for the 69-year-old Archbishop who could face up to eight years in prison.

Archbishop Hurley, who has been an anti-apartheid activist for the past 38 years, incurred the State's anger when he gave a press conference in 1983 at which he detailed atrocities committed by the South African forces occupying Namibia — specifically killings and brutal attacks committed by the notorious police unit *Koevoet* (crowbar in Afrikaans).

Under the Act it is illegal to publish information about the police without having 'reasonable grounds for believing that the statement was true.' The onus is therefore on the accused to prove 'innocence'.

This is the first trial of a leading South African white churchman and internationally the first Catholic leader in 20 years to appear in the dock for political convictions. ●

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but also for the rights of peoples and individual human beings. For this reason, it has rightly been dubbed: 'The Magna Carta of European Peace'.

In spite of the fact that the seminar was in Berlin, the question of the division of Germany received relatively little attention. Dr Sabata pointed out that the issue could not be avoided but that no consensus on it had been reached. What was agreed was that detente without demilitarization was unstable and that demilitarization, starting with the removal of foreign bases, was a prerequisite for overcoming the superpower blocs. How this might be achieved, whether through a central European nuclear free zone, as advocated by Kuron, or through unilateral steps was not discussed.

Perhaps the most significant political achievement was the *fact* of the seminar itself. Representatives of East European human rights groups and independent peace movements could meet to discuss these issues with Western peace activists, increasing their understanding of each other and accepting their political differences.

However, if such a network is to be more than just an isolated group communicating with itself, problems have to be faced. Mient Jan Faber of the Dutch Interchurch Peace Council, while seeing the seminar as useful and successful, was worried about the search for some kind of ideological consistency and worried that a refusal to compromise made the peace movement less of a mainstream political force than a year ago.

It is likely that an alliance of the forces represented at this seminar will come under attack from a number of quarters. Not just from those on the Right who would like to maintain the status quo but those like President Carter's National Security Adviser Brzezinski who in his recent article in *Foreign Affairs* appears to have co-opted many of the peace movement's arguments for an independent Europe, with the vital difference that he advocates independence through Western military strength and a subtle undermining of the Soviet position in Eastern Europe.

While Mary Kaldor argues that the co-option of these ideas is a sign of the non-aligned peace movement's strength in influencing politicians, it also demonstrates its vulnerability — a vulnerability that those at the other end of the political spectrum also wish to exploit. Yuri Zhukov, President of the Soviet Peace Committee, addressing the World Peace Council in Helsinki last October, in a paper entitled the 'Unity of the Peace Movement' attacked the 'reorientation' of the Western peace movement and the dialogue with independent groups as 'undermining the very essence of the anti-war struggle' and 'subordinating the movement to the interests of those by whom this [nuclear] threat is created'.

Non-alignment is not an easy position to maintain. The influence of Zhukov's attack could be felt at CND conference last year, in the refusal to deal with the question of Soviet nuclear weapons. If the ideas discussed at Berlin are to have any weight, the most important task ahead for the participants is the clear communication of these ideas not just to their respective members but to the public as a whole. □

INDIA

NIGHTMARE IS STILL A REALITY

Zareer Masani looks at the continuing persecution of Sikhs

New Delhi

OUTSIDE the old Mughal walls of Delhi, on the opposite bank of the Jamuna river — a thin trickle at this time of year — lie the city's so-called resettlement colonies. It was here that the capital's poor and dispossessed had to make their homes during the 'Emergency', when they were forcibly evicted from the city by Sanjay Gandhi's programme of slum-clearance. A commuter-belt of those who perform the city's most menial tasks, these townships are now, ironically, an important source of votes for the ruling Congress Party.

It was here, in the Trans-Jamuna colonies, that the worst revenge-killings of Sikhs occurred after Mrs Gandhi's assassination. And because the poor had already been banished from the city walls, Delhi's more respectable citizens could disown responsibility and claim that the violence was the work of 'outsiders'. What could not be denied, and has since been amply documented by voluntary agencies, is the complicity of Delhi Congress leaders, city officials and police officers both in the massacres themselves and in the continuing neglect and persecution of the survivors.

Local shop-owning Sikhs were already the targets of some envy among their neighbours. Congress politicians, adept at the politics of dividing the poor in order to rule, played skilfully on such jealousies, inciting Hindus and lowcaste Harijans ('untouchables') against the Sikhs. Mrs Gandhi's long-standing confrontation with the Sikhs in Punjab fuelled the communal divide, and her murder ignited the existing anger. Instigated by Congress politicians, encouraged by police protection, their ranks swollen by peasants bussed in from the surrounding countryside, Hindu mobs last November butchered about 3,000 Sikhs and drove 70,000 more from their homes.

At the height of the carnage, about 8,000 refugees took shelter in the Nanaksar Ashram, a Sikh religious foundation located close to the affected townships. Built as a centre for religious contemplation, surrounded by its own neatly cultivated fields, the Ashram today shows few visible scars of the horrors that befell many of its recent inmates. About 300 refugees remain, many of them widows, clustered in a courtyard in the winter sunshine, sewing at machines, their only means of income.

They seem stoical and calm; but then a representative of the *Nagrik Ekta Manch* (Citizens' Unity Forum), the main voluntary relief agency, appears and he is surrounded by anxious faces, desperate for some redress. As he listens helplessly, notebook in hand but not writing, the full enormity of their suffering pours out. Their homes and shops have been looted; their husbands, fathers, sons have been slaughtered and mutilated, many tortured, doused with gasolene and then burnt alive.

The government offers only derisory cash compensation — Rs. 10,000 (about £650) for a home burnt down or a close relative killed. Even this token compensation is bogged down in interminable verification procedures, with hostile investigators rejecting, on average, half the claims they receive.

'Are we to return to the same streets where the neighbours killed our loved ones?' asks a young woman, choking back tears. Some days after the riots subsided, she went with her husband to inspect the damage to their home. The neighbours collected, yelled 'So you're still alive!' and butchered her husband before her eyes. When she gets her compensation, she intends to migrate to relatives in Punjab.

AS THE GOVERNMENT winds up its official relief camps, anxious to show that life is officially back to normal, thousands of homeless survivors thrown on to the streets face similar choices. Many have left Delhi for Punjab, where strict press censorship blacks out any news of their numbers or condition. The voluntary agencies plead that the only humane solution is a comprehensive rehabilitation programme which would resettle the refugees as a community in a more secure part of Delhi. But the government will have none of it, because the last thing it wants is a concentration of Sikhs anywhere in the capital.

For a proud community, which overthrew Mogul rule and served as a privileged 'martial race' under the Raj, the worst blow inflicted by the riots and their aftermath has been the loss of dignity. At the Ashram, a 35-year-old ex-serviceman, prematurely silver-haired, with sad eyes and a wistful smile, explains how he took early retirement from the army a few months ago because Sikh troops were no longer trusted after the storming of the Golden Temple. He was trying to make a new start as a civilian, when the riots destroyed his home and everything he owned. Now, when he commutes into the city by bus in search of work, he is subjected to racial taunts by Hindu passengers.

Thousands of other survivors are having to live with the daily experience of humiliation and subjection. Many men have experienced the shame of having their hair and beards forcibly shaven. Women have suffered worse, being raped and driven to prostitution. For the 14 million Sikhs elsewhere in India, the political and psychological climate is scarcely better. Eight months after Indian army tanks stormed into their holiest shrine, the Sikh homeland in Punjab remains under military rule, its villages still subjected to 'comb-and-search' operations, its entire political leadership locked up without trial.

Can the Sikhs ever forget these traumas and regain confidence in a government which condones such barbaric atrocities against them? Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, buoyed up by his overwhelming Hindu majority, does not seem to care. But some Hindus are beginning to realise that official arrogance and neglect may be creating the conditions of a Sikh backlash. A recent report by the non-party People's Union for Civil Liberties warns: 'The possibility that the survivors might find a last resort in the camps of Sikh fundamentalists and separatists is creating apprehension in the minds of those concerned about democratic values.' □

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LETTERS

Apologia for a judge

L. H. Hoffmann, Lincoln's Inn, London

Your news item (*NS* 8 February) about the Lord Chancellor's 'decision to appoint an Afrikaaner lawyer' to the High Court Bench was regrettably racialist in tone. It is correct that Johan Van Zyl Steyn appeared for the South African Police as a young junior counsel at a riot inquiry in the early sixties. It is an honourable tradition of the South African bar, as it is of the English, that counsel is not entitled to refuse to appear for a client on the ground he disapproves of his conduct or opinions. It is this tradition which enables any litigant (even the police) to obtain legal representation without counsel having to fear that he will be identified with his client. You might equally have mentioned that when he was a silk Mr Justice Steyn appeared (as he did) for students prosecuted for protesting against South African race laws, but this would not have fitted the racial stereotype of the Afrikaner lawyer. Your statement that the new judge is 'reticent' about his South African legal career carries the inneundo that he has something to hide. Most journalists are well aware that judges do not give interviews to the press.

Since Mr Justice Steyn has never been a self-publicist, you will not find his views on South African politics on record in the public prints. But your readers may draw their own conclusions from the fact that in 1973 at the age of 40, when undoubtedly the leading advocate at the Cape Bar, product of an eminent Afrikaner family and a traditional Afrikaans education, with promotion to the South African Bench immediately in prospect, he brought his family to England and started at the bottom as a pupil barrister in the Temple. England is fortunate to gain his talents.

Gallows humour

Peter Pink, c/o Morning Star

The caption under the picture of the writing on the wall in Farringdon Road (*NS* 8 February) is not a correct decoding.

The gallows was an integral part of the original message, at the end of the inscription which you gave, accurately, as 'How long is a piece of string'. And much indignation it caused here at the time, since it was so clearly aimed at Mary Rosser. Though, it must be admitted, the person who was thus threatened fell about laughing.

Surely it should be told to all correctly if it is to be told at all.

Putting advertising to the test

David Jones, Advertising Department, New Statesman

I was prompted by Michael Lloyd's letter (*NS* 8 February) to put the advertisements in the *New Statesman* of the same week to the test.

My findings in this case do not support Mr Lloyd's rather clichéd generalisations: straightforward announcements not deliberate distortions; appeals to human sympathy rather than greed and classified advertisements which are useful, informative and entertaining. Unfortunately, like association football and politics, advertising is one of those subjects fated to be criticised by people who are deluded into thinking they know something original worth saying about it.

Incidentally, I write as someone not ashamed to declare a vested interest!

Miners knitting wool appeal

Joan Witham, Secretary, Newark Miners' Support Group, 26 Old Hall Gardens, Coddington, Newark, Notts.

I am appealing on behalf of the miners' families here in the Notts. coalfields for knitting wool. Many people who are already making donations may have unused knitting wool or could undo knitted garments. Our women in the Support Groups here are already knitting, particularly for babies and for children, but the need is never ending. If donations of wool are sent to me I will see that they are distributed immediately.

Labour Party organisation

Nick Grant, Director of Publicity, Labour Party

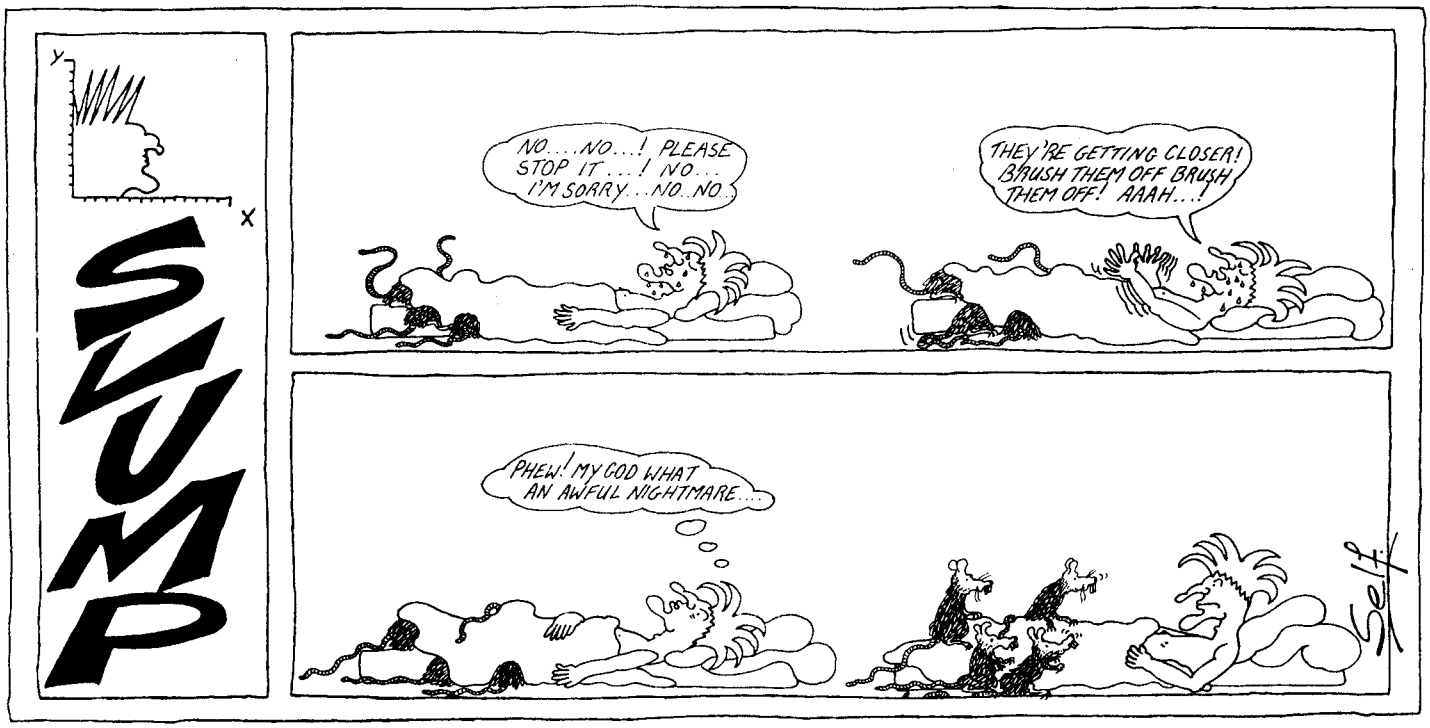
John Rentoul did not take any steps to contact me (or my colleagues) to verify whether what he had been told by 'one observer' was true. (*NS* 8 February). It is wholly untrue. This is despite the fact he *had* been in touch with us to check factual information; notwithstanding this many of the facts presented in the article *remain* incorrect.

Student Right: any 'might'?

Pablo Robertson, Chair, Scottish Labour Students

The 'Student Right' may be around but whether it has 'might' is another matter (*NS* 1 February). I don't wish to belittle Ian Sutherland's article on the increasing activities of racist and fascist groupings in Scotland, but I would like to correct his impression that the Conservative student groupings are as influential as he makes out.

In Scotland, the student movement has grown up over the last five years. It no longer sees itself as the preserve of the predominantly middle-class universities, but rather has placed increased resources and effort into developing student unionism in the further education sector. This shift in emphasis has come about because of two factors; first, that five out of the eight universities are not members of the National Union of Students (thanks to an unholy alliance in the mid-1970s of Scottish Nationalists and Tories who wished to disaffiliate the universities from the National Union for entirely different reasons), and second, due to deliberate political strategy led by Labour Students in Scotland who have a majority on the Scottish Executive of the NUS. That strategy was chosen for a number of clear reasons — that the sector is now, and always has been chronically underfunded by central and local


Y
X
SUMP
NO...NO...! PLEASE STOP IT...! NO... I'M SORRY...NO..NO..
THEY'RE GETTING CLOSER! BRUSH THEM OFF BRUSH THEM OFF! AAAH...!
PHEW! MY GOD WHAT AN AWFUL NIGHTMARE...

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government, and that with the return of mass unemployment a clear majority of young people are being economically induced to take part in further education rather than stay on the dole. Clearly, it is the duty of the Labour Party and its student wing to work for a new deal for those people now entering education. That duty has been taken seriously by the current leadership.

It is that change in emphasis which holds the clue to the failure of the Tories to be influential within the student movement; the class base of those now involving themselves in collective action for the first time is such that the Tory associations' politics, style and practice are alien to youth whose background is likely to be solidly Labour. The mistake that Ian Sutherland makes is to use examples of Conservative activity in Strathclyde and Edinburgh Universities as indicators of activity elsewhere. Not only, during the recent partial victory over the government's plan to abolish minimum awards, did the National Union of Students force the most major turnaround of this government for many years, but the extensive display of cross-sector solidarity between further education students and higher education students evidenced the total marginalisation of the Federation of Conservative Students and its ideology within the current student political scene. Such solidarity is hard to break — and the Tories show no signs of knowing how to do it.

Finally, even in the universities, the Conservative Associations are beginning to decline in both membership and influence. In every Scottish University, bar one, the Labour Club has a larger membership than the corresponding Tory Club, and the former are certainly more active. With the emergence of a split within the Tory ranks, thanks to the formation of the unofficial Conservative Student Unionists which wishes to work within the NUS, rather than attempt to destroy it, the Federation of Conservative Students will be further weakened and it is hard to imagine where the Tories will be taken seriously enough to win back the leaderships of any major student union in Scotland. The Tories can set up their drinking clubs and their reactionary anti-gay groupings but as for being a threat, I think it unlikely.

S. Wales pit study published

Philip Thomas, Welsh Campaign for Civil & Political Liberties, 13 Dogo Street, Cardiff

In 1984 I invited *NS* readers to support a research project based in the South Wales mining communities. Through your generous support a team of eight travelled throughout the coalfield and taped interviews with some 200 miners and 200 women. These tapes form part of the oral history collection of the Miners' Library, Swansea.

The experiences of these women and men have now been written up and form a book entitled *Striking Back* which will appear early in March. The book, priced £3, is being published by the NUM (South Wales) and WCCPL. There is an immediate need to raise £1,200 to pay for typesetting and printing costs. All profits will be made available to a South Wales Mining Communities Benevolent Fund.

Emlyn Williams, President of the South Wales NUM describes the book thus: 'This is no ordinary book about our struggle for our jobs and our communities. It is special because it honestly and accurately records the experiences of the women and men throughout the South Wales Coalfield. . . Our struggle is your struggle for a better life. Read and learn from this book because its message affects us all.'

Once again, please dig deep and send your contributions and orders to 'WCCPL' at the above address.

FEEDBACK

Labour: matching commitments to resources

BECAUSE OF space I shall confine my reply to your article on the Labour Party (*NS* 8 February) to five main points.

First, it deals inadequately with the relationship between finance and organisation. In 1980 the Labour Party Commission of Enquiry report underlined that the immediate task was to stop the long-term deterioration in the Party's finances.

In 1981, the deficit on the year's operations was £320,000. More than £400,000 was owed to staff. The Party had an accumulated deficit of more than £500,000 and there were no reserves. Our main 'asset' was unsold literature. The Party does not own its Walworth Road offices.

In 1982 the Party was heading for an overdraft of between £750,000 and £800,000. Our bankers had authorised a limit of £500,000. Our finance department had to be re-organised but the Party had no money for redundancy pay to which it was committed under an earlier agreement. Affiliated trade union membership was declining because of unemployment.

During the last three years some improvement has been secured. In 1983 the Party had a surplus on its operating account. The audit of the 1984 figures has not yet been completed but our finance department anticipate that again we will be in balance. If this proves correct, it will be the first time for many years that the Party has made an operating surplus in two successive years. We also, separately, made a small surplus on the 1983 General Election account.

More than £400,000 arrears of salary have now been paid off. Because of the generosity of unions we were able to meet our redundancy payment obligations and to restructure the finance department.

This modest improvement was secured primarily through the co-operation of staff, who, in my view, are all too frequently criticised. During my three-year period of office they accepted, first, a pay freeze in 1982, then a 5 per cent increase in 1983, and a little more than 3 per cent in 1984. This was much less than the increase in the cost of living. But this was not all. The total number of staff has also been reduced even though the commitments falling on the Party have been increased and new posts have been created to carry out previous recommendations. The reduction has been secured by 'natural wastage'. This, in a relatively small staff, creates problems.

Second, the article retailed an unjustified observation against named heads of departments. It said, 'according to one observer', that three named heads will fight tooth and nail against Larry Whitty, the new General Secretary. There is not a scrap of evidence to support this charge.

Third, in an inset to the article it is alleged that recommendations for a participatory management style have not been implemented. What then is meant by a participatory management style? In my view there are a number of essential ingredients. Management should endorse the need for strong and effective trade union organisation among the staff. There must be good procedure agreements. Both management and staff should have the right to raise whatever they regard as relevant. The procedure should provide for consultation and negotiation at all levels where decisions are made. And it should also provide that no changes are made to agreed conditions except by further agreement or, failing agreement, until after the negotiating procedure has been exhausted.

Participation implies that there should be a range of issues subject to joint regulation expressed through collective agreements. It also implies a readiness by management to take into account views expressed by staff representatives, including views on issues not subject to joint regulation.

I have no doubt that in our day to day work and under the pressure of events I and the departmental heads at Walworth Road do not always live up to these high standards. But we try, with the support of the National Executive Committee, to move towards them. We have 100 per cent trade union membership. Our main procedure agreement, revised and signed at the beginning of 1984, embraces the principles which I set out earlier. Our collective agreements cover a very wide range of issues affecting staff.

Fourth, your article referred critically to the departmental structure at Walworth Road. The departments relate broadly to the committee structure of the NEC. The departmental heads do not determine the committee structure; they serve it.

Your article alleged that all power is concentrated with the regular meetings of departmental heads. This is wrong. There are at least four important contraints. There are the decisions of the National Executive Committee, the obligations of the procedure agreements with the unions, the Party's financial problems and finally — for better or worse — the influence of the General Secretary.

What is wrong with the principle that there should be regular meetings of departmental heads? It has a number of advantages. It stimulates a sense of corporate responsibility and affords a mechanism through which we inform and advise each other.

Your article stated that the Labour Party employs at Westminster about 250 staff and receives nearly £3 million of public money a year. This is not so. We employ eight staff at Westminster and receive only sufficient money from public funds to pay for them. Secretaries and research assistants employed by Labour Members of Parliament are not employed by the Party.

During the last three years the Finance & General Purposes Committee has operated effectively as a resource planning committee. It has spent many hours considering and revising budget proposals. It has been looking ahead to match commitments to resources. The essential fact about the organisation of the Labour Party is that it has inadequate resources to perform the many tasks which are required of it.

J. E. Mortimer

J. E. Mortimer is General Secretary of the Labour Party.

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A hidden history

Ben Okri

and because nothing can be hidden from memory the houses in the street were in ruins. The last inhabitants were immigrants from lands whose destinies had been altered by slavery. They had come, answering the call of their former rulers, to be menials of society. When they first arrived they brought laughter to the street. They thought a wider world had opened to them. The sun on the pavement, glittering bits of broken glass, dazzled their visions. After that first breath of the spring air, that early wonder, their sensations would never be so pure.

and children were born; they grew up in the street; the world did not want them. On weekends they played football and listened to popular music through the open windows. The men bought second-hand cars (which never travelled far) and washed them with the family on Saturdays. On Sundays they painted the doors, tended the drooping flowers in the pots, and worshipped different gods. They made friendships which did not last when the troubles came. They built little wooden gates in front of their houses.

and all that time the inhabitants thought the world was growing bigger, it was actually being made smaller. The invisible places of the country soon located them. One morning they all received letters from the government. They read the letters, saw incomprehensible shapes of the future, and kept quiet. They had solitary Christmases that year.

the winter was hardly over when two demolition hulks were implanted at the mouth of the street. The second-hand cars were sold off. Shadows lengthened on the street, music ceased coming from the windows, and the children didn't come out to play. Some of the houses had their electricity cut and rising damp grew wild on the walls. The houses which all those years had been sinking into decrepitude, were mysteriously quickened into rot. People were only seen in the mornings, when the mists were heavy and grey; or at night, when they wound complicated routes to avoid it being known that they lived in a street that was being effaced from memory. The inhabitants began to look out despairingly from behind their windows. I saw them sometimes, their faces squashed together, staring bewildered at the advancement of the tower blocks.

then one by one — shamefully, like a disgraced people — they left. Vacated houses were quickly boarded up and fenced round with corrugated zinc. Street lamps stopped functioning. It was just as well for it became unnecessary for them to pretend they did not see one another. Those that stayed watched as those from other places emptied their rubbish at the mouth of the street. The demolition hulks grew rust. The metal balls grew heavier in the air.

then came the mob from the tower blocks and from other places in the city, a generation that would not find employment. They discovered the street and its last remaining inhabitants. They burned down one of the houses and experimented with two others. The mob, however, were not the real reason for the increased disappearance of the street's inhabitants. They had to leave every single one of them because a monstrous negative force rose from the wild gardens of all the rotting houses. The children imagined all kinds of sounds in the street and the men dreamed of metal balls that were as large as the sky. The children and women stayed awake most nights because the street had become the repository of all the invisible hatred of all those who lived around, and who dreamed of a large playground for their children and a pond in the middle so the children could sometimes see their reflections.

when the last of them left (with their large families) I watched from the window and saw them in the chill of morning as they scuttled between house and road, carrying their radiograms, boxes of clothes, photo albums, and some chinoiserie. There was a lorry waiting to take them away. I went down amongst them, to console them. When they saw me they gave gasps of horror. Had I been away for so long? Afraid that I might make their burden heavier, I passed on. They packed quickly and nervously. The lorries took them away. They had forgotten the dreams that brought them here. The roads they would walk on were paved with blood: how could they have thought of it as gold?

after they left the rats discovered the street. When the rats found the gardens, the empty rotting houses, the cupboards infested with the purple of long left over food, they rejoiced. They screeched loudly in the discovery of so hidden a universe, of pastures so rich.

* * *

the hatred of all those who grew more imprisoned within the advancing towers did not stop when the inhabitants disappeared. They hated the street even more ferociously because it was now devoid of the brand of human content that they had worked so hard to efface. Vengeantly, they brought their rubbish to the empty street. Packs of dogs were encouraged by canophiles to excrete there to their heart's content. Many of the dogs that came there were mangy, their tails hung up stiff, and they had no owners. I often watched the dogs that never formed alliances, that always ran along on their own, their eyes sly, their tails quick to noise. I went amongst them sometimes and found them a generally quite trusting bunch of individuals. Gangs of humans came there too. They turned the street into their initiation ground. They excreted from place to place along the street. They threw things at one another. They never forgot to curse the former inhabitants as though they were still living in the street. I passed amongst them sometimes. They ignored me.

the birds came too. They wheeled in the air and alighted on the street. Ravens, crows and starlings, there were so many of them sometimes that there wouldn't be a single visible place on the street and rooftops besides their restless shapes. They often managed to infest the rubbish mounds with vibrant life. When they departed, flapping their wings and beating spirals of feathers into the air, they left the street and rooftops beneath them covered in mottled white, the true purpose of their visits.

then the demolition hulks were retrieved from the garbage: there seemed to be no more interest in destroying the street, which was left to fester. Those who came to dump their rubbish there never needed to look, to see the uneven humps of rubbish

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Cliff Harper

formation, nor did they ever need to imagine the pressure of refuse on refuse, compressing into some unknown substance or slime: the distilled liquids of the streets.

sulphurous smells rose from this festeration. Pink mushrooms sprouted. Strange vegetable life took root beneath the rubbish and spread wings in the nights and grew rings round the street. Then this vegetable life flowered into purple and green fauna, beautiful to look at like the fata morgana with terrible blue eyes, but they gave off corrosive smells that drove the dogs to a restricted area of the street: to the area that I dwell in, earth-bound. To see the festerations flower, to see them bloom, and to see what they flowered from, what liquids, to see this from one night to another: this is the vision at the heart of nightmare.

* * *

from the tower blocks that surrounded the street came the sound of continuous wailing. Babies cried loud into the most serene mornings. Men and women sometimes threw themselves down from the heights and smashed their bodies on the cement lawns. Everywhere they cried for a space free from history. The towers advanced. The street stayed fetid.

and then!

one night a silver chill hung over the street. Several people went past, away from the towers. Who were they? What new exodus did they represent? They grumbled and cursed. Green mists formed when they breathed. Had they come up with a new use for their neglect? They didn't stop and didn't look. I saw that not one of them could hold their dignity in the midst of the sunken street.

not one of them!

* * *

sometimes I could hear the rain before it pattered on the broken pavements. That night it rained. Silvery drops slanted and washed down hard on the street. It was difficult to see into the rain. It was on such nights that I felt the burden of earthboundness, having to see it all in every grain and not see very far at all. Yes the rain slanted. The rain force came beating down and disintegrating streams crashed on the rooftops. The house shook, a section of the walls collapsed behind me. It rained beyond the dreams of the season. It struck me that cosmic phenomena — the indifferent thing at the centre of boundless love — also has a function on this the most forgotten planet of them all. What rain it was. How it poured down so all you could see was water. The street flooded. Unable to flow anywhere else, it became a lake harbouring its own putrefaction.

the following morning I saw that the tiles of the rooftops had gone. Some of the

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houses had crumbled. The streetlamps had been beaten almost parallel with the ground. When the water drained away, the street was washed brilliantly clean. Rain-clean. And the rubbish heaps? They were all over the entrance. The street was blocked off with the soggy pilings of rubbish stacked so high that my immolation seemed complete.

I was wrong. Later that day I heard a curious annunciation: the coughing of a car engine. Then the sound, agonised and insistent, climbed the refuse. Then it came from on high, from the rooftops, or from the heavens. It soon became clear that someone was having great difficulty dislodging mucus from their nose, as well as great persistence. Soon they burst into song, a dreadful song. They struck me as one who never sang at all. In this most unmysterious of places, they had rediscovered a use for their unmelodic voice. I looked out of the window. Set against the skyline, like an apocalyptic scarecrow, a ragged figure from the end of time, was the man who I named The Listmaker.

he was a squat man. He had thin wisps of black hair. He clambered down from the heights of refuse, bringing wet rubbish upon his head. He took measured strides along the street. He must have fancied himself the discoverer of a new city. He saw the street in a much cleaner condition than it had ever known so I could forgive the ecstasy which seemed to possess him. I almost envied him the discovery of a place that seemed new, a fresh slate on which he could scratch his nature.

one of his eyes was clotted, the other one twitched. He took an abnormal interest in material things like stones, corals, broken glass, rubbish linings (regardless of their conditions and what they contained), hardened — indeed, fossilised — pieces of dogshit. He listened to these objects, smelt them, laughed at them. He found himself somewhere to live in the back rooms of a half-crumbled house. If he was mad it was in the Africa in his mind that he was mad.

of all earthly creatures, only fleas have the capacity to irritate my insubstantial nature. There were no fleas before. He brought them. The smell of rats came from him every morning. He would shake out his coat with the first blessed light of dawn. The clouds which materialised from that coat took the form of wingless nightmares and haunted me. When the urge seized him he would thrash his coat on the street, whip it on the lamp posts, or he would swing it round his head in the air like a monstrous lasso. He created such a din that I sometimes waited excitedly for his own terrible cloud of filth to take on a centrifugal force and swing him away. It never happened.

and he stayed.

and because of him the birds, which brought flight and wondrous gliding, stopped coming. The street dogs also stopped. Even animals fear the smell of madness.

* * *

the world did try to reach us. They hacked through and climbed over the mountainous entanglement of rot. When the explorers set eye on The Listmaker they proceeded to beat him up. They turned out to be a later generation of mobs from the tower blocks and other places in the city, a generation that would not find employment. They had inherited the myth of the street of hate. They drove The Listmaker to a corner.

every new day The Listmaker forgot that the street was no longer his to investigate, to wander around in its labyrinths. He didn't notice that he was in a new situation of danger. It was when they took to stoning him from the top of the mountainous refuse that I first heard him laughing and crying in a new insanity. To console him, I paid him a visit.

hundreds of big dark rats with paranoid eyes and long tails scattered themselves as I came in. The walls of The Listmaker's abode were covered in green and grey fungus. The cracks in the walls spread like an annotated illumination of arteries. The ceiling was profuse with sentient mushrooms. Jasmines and chrysanthemums, long left to rot, stank from the bog-waste of the gardens. Christmas trees grown abnormally large twisted with weeping willows and ivys. His domain wearied me. I was anxious to leave. In the next room I heard him cough and blow his nose (insistently, and with courage). I sped on, anxious to leave, for it was doubly earthbound being there. I went into his room. His twitching eye gave a sour look in my direction. The itch seized him: he found his coat and thrashed it insanely on the floor and walls; and drove me away.

* * *

sometimes when he thought his antagonists weren't around he would roam the street again: up and down, round and round, crawling about in imaginary cellars. But they watched him silently from the top of the refuse and they saw him as he made imaginary lists and investigated every rubbish lining. One day they posted a rubbish bin lining for him to investigate. They left it in the middle of the street.

they watched him from the top of the refuse. They watched him, remembering that he was of the devil, cursed in the bible; remembering that his sperm was black, that he was descendant of an ape; remembering that he was one of those who tainted their race, took their jobs and their father's jobs, took their women; and remembering that he had a member big enough to shame the human race.

they held their breath as they watched him going up and down, circling inevitably towards the rubbish bin lining. He got to the lining and opened it and dipped his hand in. His eye twitched. He brought out a bloodied leg: its toes were big and blue-black with a strange rot of the feet. He brought out a hand that was gnarled and withered like a twig. He brought out an arm chopped off at the shoulder, dangling a sticky mess of blood vessels and nerves. He brought out the head of a black woman, roughly hacked, the eyes shut and bloated, the nose cut like a harelip that had repeated itself. He brought them out, smelling, listening, thorough in his investigation. He was drawn by the temptation to list.

his antagonists watched him from the refuse. Their faces had turned red with extra-ordinarily suppressed animation.

The Listmaker fixedly examined the parts of the woman's body. He tried to fit them into a coherent picture, a thing, and it seemed his memory utterly failed him. I hurried down. Why? What could I do? When I got to the street he had already put the parts of the woman back into the lining. His eyes had gone strange: they no longer seemed to have any connection with his head. He pushed past, dragging the burdened lining behind him. He went round and round, in zigs and zags. I watched him for a sign of how long I would be condemned in this prison of a street that was always made new, and with the old things seeping from underneath.

suddenly one of his antagonists up on the refuse threw up. Another one threw up as well, convulsively. Then they all fell to vomiting. They scrambled down the refuse and they were throwing up and choking all the way into the distance.

The Listmaker tried to fit the pieces of the woman's body into a remembered shape. He tried for a long time. After a while he no longer appeared on the street. I went searching for him. He was nowhere to be found. The street entirely swallowed him.

afterwards they came and demolished what was left standing of the crumbled houses. It was all so much that, with all the burden, I asked for a clear sky and a warm little sun like a golden eye always seeing. I slept. It rained a thousand times and sunned a thousand others in the long spaces of that sleep. I awoke as black an angel as I've always been, my wings heavy and black like all the sin they make me carry in their language.

* * *

the tower blocks had been replaced with gigantic ones. The sky was fiery. The sun had moved permanently closer. The gigantic tower blocks were empty. At night I could hear only the cats wailing in ecstasy over the city. Nothing can be pushed beneath the surface of memory. There was a green lake where the street had been. □

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Peepshow

Peter Dormer

Diane Arbus
PATRICIA BOSWORTH *Heinemann* £14.95

DIANE ARBUS was an American photographer who began her career taking fashion pictures but who is both admired and reviled for her serious portraiture. She died in 1971. Although she found it burdensome, Arbus thoroughly deserved her reputation as a photographer of freaks. She went out of her way to find dwarfs, giants, the retarded, the insane, the drugged, the dossers and the drunk. Other people not in those categories were also photographed in such a way that they appeared kinky or angst-ridden or in a spiritual torpor. As Susan Sontag has said, Arbus capitalised on the camera's ability to insinuate the surreal or the screwball into *anything*.

But, while many of Arbus's photographs seem fraudulent — hyped-up sensationalism — others do make what appear to be a genuine addition to our experience of human beings.

There has been some good critical commentary about Arbus's photographs, notably by Susan Sontag in her book *On Photography*, but rather too little written about the woman herself, the little rich girl who was pretty and bright and turned herself into a kind of freak. Patricia Bosworth's biography is a fascinating and easy read; it unfolds like a story but is full of facts and documentation culled from several years of interviewing people who knew or worked with Arbus.

Bosworth does not attempt an analysis of Arbus's photographs nor does she judge the moral issues which are raised by them and by how they were obtained. Instead she sets out to tell us what sort of woman it was who took these disturbing and sometimes lacerating photographs.

Arbus was a great seducer, a great charmer. She did not spy on her subjects, she cajoled and spent hours with them and then fixed them. Some people excuse the cruelty in Arbus's portraits by saying that her subjects collaborated with her but that is utter nonsense. Arbus could take photographs that showed you to the world as a degenerate or a moron or as full of prejudice. Few people expect that treatment from a photographer, especially if she's been nice to them, and even fewer would collaborate in their own downfall.

Throughout the book people testify to how insinuating in her charm Arbus could be, but if that did not work she had ambition and tenacity enough to continue taking photographs regardless of the subject's feelings. Germaine Greer describes how Arbus came to photograph her while she was resting on the bed in her hotel room after a hard day promoting *The Female Eunuch*. The photographic session developed into a duel, with Arbus climbing on to the bed, clicking away with her camera. Greer says, 'I resisted being photographed like that — close up with all my pores and lines showing — I became aware that she would only shoot when my face was showing tension or concern or boredom or annoyance. . .' Greer guessed what Arbus was up to but others did not. Viva, the actress who worked for Andy Warhol, suffered from some brutal photography by Arbus and complains to Bosworth, 'Those photographs were faked. . .I trusted her because she acted like a martyr, a little saint. . . Diane Arbus lied, cheated and victimized me.'

Apart from having the gift of persuasion Arbus was especially observant. For me one of her most moving portraits shows a teenage couple with young bodies and old faces showing no signs of the possibility of growth or change that should be present at their age. This pair will remain hopeless and limited by poverty all their lives, although in the picture they are proud and smiling. They would see the photograph as a memento of an event, a chance encounter with a nice lady. Indeed the boy, posing as a real man with his diminutive arm around his girl friend's shoulder, probably felt he'd come out well — there he is, Jack the lad. He'd be unaware that to the world he would look naive and oddly, sadly, aged decades before his time.

Arbus emerges from Bosworth's biography as a complicated, gifted personality: she suffered badly from the break-up of her marriage and also from bouts of depression. And, although so ruthless in betraying the trust of her subjects, she craved for herself binding relationships in which she could trust. Towards the end of her life she went to another extreme and had, if she is to be believed, dozens of one-night sexual encounters. She said she never refused a man who said he wanted to sleep with her. In this way she was capable of using herself as an object, perhaps to satisfy curiosity as much as anything.

Arbus has become a romantic figure. In her strange, frequently nocturnal wanderings in New York's seamier and more dangerous haunts she becomes the epitome of the romantic, individualist and angst-ridden artist. The fact that she killed herself legitimises (too easily) this view of her as someone who visited hell once too often.

Public reaction to her work has been interesting. When her pictures were first shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York they attracted crowds. Some visitors spat at the pictures, others were excited by them. Susan Sontag assessed the appeal of the photographs as 'typical of the kind of art popular among sophisticated urban people right now [1973]: art that is a self-willed test of hardness.' Fashion has changed again since Sontag wrote that but Arbus certainly extended the boundaries of tolerance — a two-edged achievement — and she spawned several unsavoury imitators. In essence this biography tells us that Arbus took the pictures she took because she was mixed up, and scarily mixed up at that, but that neither detracts from nor legitimises the worth of the work. The fact remains that the majority of Arbus's subjects were ill-used by her and yet it is arguable that some of the results are so enthralling that they are a justification of the abuse. Bosworth wisely leaves such arguments to individual consciences. □

Attacked by the camera? Diane Arbus's view of Germaine Greer (1970) is taken from *Diane Arbus: Magazine Work*, an Aperture publication distributed here by Phaidon. Edited by Doon Arbus and Marvin Israel, it includes around 150 photographs with descriptive text by their maker.

Golden gloss

Bill Greenwell

The Quest for Merlin
NIKOLAI TOLSTOY *Hamish Hamilton* £12.95

HAVING A national crisis? Fancy some fancy ancestry? Well, hitch your lineage to Camelot, and bring on your Welsh wizard to spruce up your image with tremendous spells.

Not the least remarkable aspect of this careful unravelling of the truth about Merlin (Merlyn, Myrddin) is the revelation of the 'freak of

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history' which secured his familiar place in popular culture. Malory's *Morte Darthur*, the source on which — via Tennyson, White and Disney — we draw, was published just in time. Caxton's 1485 edition appeared three weeks before Bosworth, which Henry Tudor, Welsh-blooded, won handsomely. In 1135, the generous helpings of imaginative tosh offered by Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Histories* had been swallowed whole by Norman nobles happy to nobble some handily heroic credentials. Now Malory's splendid bunkum was just what the doctorers of history ordered. Merlin had prophesied that a Welshman would rule again; here he was; what better, then, to give your throne some extra golden gloss?

Not slow off the mark, Henry Tudor — Henry VII — had his new son christened Arthur within a year. There was precedent. Almost exactly 300 years earlier, Henry II had worked the same trick. The difference was that, in Tudor times, contemporary critics were already passing the whisper around that this Arthurian stuff was — well, *suspect*.

As of course it is; although I share Tolstoy's warm relief that Arthur, Merlin and company escaped the Renaissance, thanks to their appropriation by Tudor propaganda. They lightened my childhood, too. It is not surprising, either, that Tolstoy's quest for his boyhood hero, scholarly though it is, is softened by sentimental touches. When he stands on the site of Arderydd, the battle where perished Merlin's pagan patron, King Gwenddolau, Tolstoy has to be restrained from buying up a deserted local cottage by a sanguine relative. And when, in his most remarkable personal discovery, he locates the site of Merlin's desolate and secluded retreat, magic fountain and all, he is in there, literally lapping it up.

Tolstoy's thesis is persuasive. He identifies Merlin as an influential sixth-century shaman, resisting Christianity in the Caledonian lowlands — near Carlisle. Priest, poet and kingmaker, he is living about a century *after* Arthur, with whom he is associated only by romantic hindsight. He witnesses the overthrow of his druidical power by Christians and, maddened, takes to the wilds, an oracular figure still of substantial repute. We are, note, nowhere near Tintagel, far from Glastonbury, well away from Wales and indeed from Stonehenge, on which Tolstoy expends considerable energy in his sometimes fretful quest. Stonehenge is identified as the British *Omphalos*, the sacred navel of Celtic religion. The survival of its sanctity in the post-Roman era interests Tolstoy, since it helps him establish the continuing existence of a druidical tradition, of which Merlin is presented as a notable proponent.

Tolstoy takes great pains to quarry mythology — not merely Celtic — to show that the stranger tales associated with Merlin are not just romantic yarns. He shows their relationship with numerous aspects of pagan ritual, carefully disentangling each thread to reinforce his suggestion that Merlin belonged to a flourishing cult. This part of the book is particularly convincing, and impeccably presented. Tolstoy's only fault is a habit, initially disarming, of repeatedly reassuring us that his speculations have excellent references. This apologetic tactic began to induce in me some actual anxiety.

For instance: Tolstoy is rather foggy about Merlin's death. Oral tradition has it by the Tweed. However, a Merlin-like figure, Lailoken, credibly identified with our principal wizard and subject of similar Celtic legend, is represented as dying rather spectacularly (simultaneously stoned, drowned and impaled!) at the same place. A third figure, from contemporaneous Northern Irish legend, Suibhne, is therefore pressed into service by the writer, since he too is subject to the 'threefold death', and resembles both Lailoken-Merlin and Merlin in other ways. There is a definite sense here that Tolstoy feels the Irish Sea to be an unfortunate obstacle to asserting that Suibhne, like Lailoken, *is* Merlin. And further, that the Merlin legend must have originally included a threefold death, thus substantiating the oral tradition about Merlin's place of death. Tolstoy even calls the Suibhne legend 'a version of (Merlin's) *career*.' (My emphasis). I sense some wishful thinking here.

Far happier are Tolstoy's assertions that, as in Christ's case, a genuine person lurks behind the legend. This is well-proven, and entertainingly, too. Given history's mishaps, also as with Christ, the precise extent of Merlin's influence in his lifetime must remain more open to speculation. Unhappily, Tolstoy's engaging quest does not stop with Merlin, however. He adds a cosmic epilogue, ranging over human history, insisting that the religious impulse is not the proper business of social or biological science. The reason why people believe in gods, or God, is. . .God. Supernatural forces shape our world, and Merlin is

> the objectivisation of God; the emergence from unconsciousness to the reflected daylight of divine consciousness, and the return to absorption once again in transcendent divinity.

High priest of the Celtic twilight; wild man of the Caledonian woods — this much I shall cheerily take. Tolstoy tells me I ignore the implications at 'mortal risk'. It is one I shall have to run. □

FICTION

Conjuring

Grace Ingoldby

Valley of Decision
STANLEY MIDDLETON *Hutchinson* £8.95
Mortadella
JUSTIN WINTLE *Secker* £8.50
The Trap
JOHN TREHERNE *Cape* £7.95
Novel with Cocaine
M. AGEYEV *Picador* £7.95 & £2.95
Joanna's Luck
MERVYN JONES *Piatkus* £8.50

MIDDLETON is a bit of a magician, though rarely described as such. With 23 novels and a Booker beneath his belt, he takes again as his text the ordinary lives of ordinary people, in the Midlands, itself an ordinary place. This is domestic drama minus histrionics or the kitchen sink stereotype. David and Mary are married and in love, get on with their respective in-laws and with their jobs. David is an amateur cellist and a teacher, Mary sings (accompanied by mother-in-law on the piano) and works for David's dad — but, when Mary is offered an opera tour in the States, she takes it and, what's more, she doesn't look back. The delight of Middleton is his approach; rather than adopt an unusual angle on the ordinary he takes a very much closer look. David's plight, left, lonely, surprised and suddenly full of doubt, is convincing and moving and sad. Here, where no planes crash, where people behave well and no one makes much fuss, when David admits to himself that he is 'desolate' we know it to be true. Middleton could make a rice-pudding skin ripple with tension and keep us interested, make us care.

By contrast, unfair but in this instance irresistible, Justin Wintle stands on his head in **Mortadella**, swings from the light bulb, displays like a peacock albeit in an elegant and erudite way. Dr James, an Oxford philosophy don, describes his tale as one concerned with villainy, gluttony, sloth, 'with venery and with gold'. The villain is Moyski, a Polish philosophy student with total recall of the English poets, pathological verbosity and a big prick, described as 'standing up well to public scrutiny' by James who sees it with a sinking heart across an Italian courtyard when the two meet in Bologna ten years on. The novel is rich, a rather consciously created swirling soup: philosophy, fantasy, miracles, sex (all sorts), prophecy — 'Eurocommunism is playing John the Baptist to the relaunch of Christendom' — and much besides. Moyski is a monster and takes Dr James for his ideas, lovers, in fact everything he's got, but the soup, however full of good things, is ultimately too various to taste of anything much at all.

The Trap, too, begins at Oxbridge, once more portrayed as harassing and dull, but after a shaky start Treherne extricates his vexed professor from cap and gown and back into short trousers via a cutting from the *North Wilts Herald & Advertiser* which returns him to his childhood, bad Uncle Hector and the trap. Something nasty that happened years ago in Uncle's orchard has haunted James Yeo ever since and the novel, part-thriller part-detective, takes us back to find out what it was. Childhood is a writer's minefield but Treherne crosses it marvellously well. Young James is a natural, absorbed in collecting animal bones but also keen on stoning cats, making toy rafts which won't work and ambitious plans for dens he is technically unable to construct. Adolescent James is equally convincing, describing himself at home as like 'a slug in a wilting bunch of flowers'. Treherne is also telling in his portrayal of James the adult, after the 'long climb to academic obscurity', entertaining other adults by making a travesty of that childhood; remembering Darkie Hurrel the poacher he once loved as an 'amusing thief and sponger' for their benefit. Treherne writes about childhood without whimsy and is horribly honest about the cynicism and insecurity of the adult who will turn anything to effect. This is his first fiction, moving, satisfying and good.

Novel with Cocaine has a curious history,

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as haunting and desperate as the tale it tells. Written by a Russian, perhaps pseudonymously, set in Moscow pre/post 1917, it first saw light in a Russian emigré journal in Paris which received it as an unsolicited manuscript in the 1930s from an address in Istanbul. The novel enjoyed a *succès de scandale* but Ageyev, who apparently meant to establish himself in Paris as a result, never turned up in France. A passport sent to a friend was lost; friend, Ageyev and passport have not been heard of since and, should the novel be as autobiographical as it appears, one can but imagine the worst. In an intriguing preface the translator, Michael Heim, describes Ageyev's tortured adolescent Vadim as 'humiliated and self-humiliating'. Vadim's story is one in which reconciliation with himself and others is impossible, a young man with no middle-ground he feeds his own repulsion. He loves his mother, he hates her, pushes her face into the soup, shuns her in public, steals from her, broken-hearted he dreams he finds her dead. Boundless filial cruelty is coupled with an inability to dovetail love and lust: he behaves like a harlot and is seen as quite a man, he is impotent in the arms of the woman he loves. Vadim, the bright student, owes more to Raskolnikov than to Stephen Dedalus or Holden Caulfield; cocaine takes him way beyond them both. The epilogue describes what has happened in Russia while the revolution in Vadim's body raged and wasted to its end, a compulsive read, much more than a period piece.

Joanna's Luck is a mild story of how an average girl responds to the pressures of London in the 1980s. Unemployed, unattached and reflective, Joanna is led to concentrate her energies on losing her virginity, an event which her contemporaries consider to be long overdue. The men are not up to much but Jones guides his modern heroine through the cross-currents of conflicting pressures to good fortune and a happy end. □

Clearing house

Christopher Hird

Gentlemen of Fortune: The World's Merchant and Investment Bankers
PAUL FERRIS *Weidenfeld* £10.95
Capital City: London as a Financial Centre
HAMISH MCRAE and FRANCES CAIRNCROSS *Methuen* £8.95
Capitalism Divided? The City and Industry in British Social Development
GEOFFREY INGHAM *Macmillan* £20 & £7.95

YOU HAVE only to walk around the City of London to see how it prospers. It contains some of the most expensive offices and restaurants in town. But more than this — there has been a tremendous increase in the City's success and wealth in the last ten years. As Britain's manufacturing industry has declined the City has thriven. It is still, as McRae and Cairncross remind us, on any measure you choose, the world's leading financial centre. How has it achieved this pre-eminence? How has it hung on to it? What is the nature of the power it wields and is the City's success anything to do with the failure of much of the rest of the economy?

These are questions which habitually concern Labour governments; the Callaghan government set up a special enquiry under Harold Wilson to find the answer to the last two questions. And the belief that the City is immensely, and dangerously, powerful lies behind many left-wing policies for dealing with the banks, industry and the economy.

Ferris's book is a good illustration of the real difficulty in pinpointing the nature of the City's power and how it is influenced. As the book's sub-title suggests, Ferris's canvas is wider than just London. It is clearly a book from a particular publishing genre, of which the ingredients are a marketable journalist, a racy reportage style and a sure American market. Ferris has spent a lot of time in the offices of merchant banks around the world — many in London — but he is often at a loss to explain what is going on. On the day he visited Hambros, Ferris 'had no idea who any of the people were' and had to cope with 'a flurry of exchanges I couldn't follow'.

The Ferris technique provides plenty of graphic accounts of what goes on in the offices of merchant banks — often with excruciatingly irrelevant details about the sandwiches they eat and the weather outside. It makes the book easy to read; you get some feel of what the atmosphere is really like in City offices but there is little explanation of why it is all there, where the power is and what is the force that drives it.

Cairncross and McRae have been around the City as financial journalists for many years and know how hard it is to find out what is going on and why by just watching. As they write:

> Most of the people in the City. . . know and usually like each other. They probably bump into each other at various committees, see each other from time to time over lunch, and greet each other when they pass in the street. . .Lunch is the epitome of the City's seductive blend of work and social life. It is the occasion on which cautious hints are dropped, delicate information traded and lucrative acquaintances sealed.

Cairncross and McRae are friends of the City, though not its unthinking defenders. As they admit, they have — like many of us — enjoyed the City's luncheon tables. Their combined knowledge of the City is considerable but their criticism somewhat muted. For example, they express responsible concern about the fantastic and uncontrolled growth of the big investment institutions — pension funds and insurance companies — but absolve them of blame for moving hundreds of millions of pounds of capital out of Britain.

But theirs is a good textbook: every City institution is explained — banks, building societies, the money markets, currency markets, all the insurance markets and so on. You don't have agree with their value judgments to value their research. Indeed, it is significant that Geoffrey Ingham quotes the earlier edition of their book as one of his historical sources.

Ingham's analysis of the City is this: for centuries the City was dominated by several activities — the discounting of bills (ie trading in IOUs), the raising of loans for governments, the providing of insurance and matching of buyers and sellers in commodity transactions. The importance of all these is that the City acts as an *intermediary*, that its interest in any transaction is *short-term*, that its perspective is outward looking to the rest of the world and that its relationship with government is particularly intimate.

Take, for example, the foundation of the Bank of England in 1694. In return for a loan to finance military ventures on the continent, the government gave the bank (owned by London's leading merchants) a monopoly as Britain's only effective bank. This considerably helped to consolidate the City's power in the land, especially as it continued to raise money for the government. Indeed, so great was government borrowing that a secondary market was established — in which people could deal in government stock: the Stock Exchange.

The significance in Ingham's analysis is that the important features of the City and its relationship with the government were established long before the Victorian industrial revolution. And all these features are inimicable to helping risky industrial investment in Britain. Set in this historical context, it is easy to understand both the split between industry and the City and the prevalence of pro-City economic policies in all recent British governments.

Much of Ingham's analysis may be familiar to *NS* readers as some is based on the work of

THIS WEEK in
Why today's young act so old
Jeans off, suit on. A reaction against adults' babyish ways?
Colonel Gaddafy's power game
A detailed analysis of how the Libyan State works
What is the BBC worth?
The licence system is under attack. But the alternatives are worse.
Plus: Love me, love my genes — the genetics of St Valentine's Day
NEWSociety

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people whose research has been published in this magazine — in particular that of Richard Minns. But the significance of his book really is that it is a deliberate attack on much thinking on the Left about the City. In particular he criticises those Marxists who insist that everything can be explained by the demands of manufacturing industry and the control of the state by the ruling class. Things are, Ingham shows, much more complicated than that.

If Ingham is correct — and I think basically he is — it provides a real challenge for the Left and the Labour Party. As he says, 'proposals for the nationalisation of the financial system. . .would probably have very little impact unless it was to be accompanied by a restructuring of the City's markets and, in particular, its international roles.' Given the substantial vested interests and financial success of the City, that presents quite a problem. □

PAPERBACKS

Own gaols?

Alan Brien

> The war has already almost destroyed that nation . . . I have seen, I guess, as much blood and disaster as any living man and it just turned my stomach the last time I was there. After I looked at that wreckage and those thousands of women and children and everything, I vomited.

THE WAR was in Korea. The speaker, General MacArthur testifying before the Senate after his dismissal by Truman. The time, less than a third of the way, as it turned out, into that war. And the destruction, disaster and bloodshed, even in MacArthur's view, overwhelmingly the result of terrifying over-reactions by US-dominated UN forces there.

The quotation is from **The Uses of Anti-Communism** (Merlin, £12.50 & £5.50), the 21st annual volume of 'The Socialist Register' and the first to be devoted to essays on a single subject.

The Korean War was probably the most critical turning point in post-1945 history. Despite this, or perhaps because of this, it can also claim to be probably the least analysed, and most mis-understood, campaign of the Cold War. The Koreans had suffered, and bitterly resisted, Japanese occupation. Yet once their masters capitulated, they found their country divided, and re-occupied, by the Russians and the Americans. Left alone, the evidence suggests, Korea would, like Vietnam, have provided the embryo of a united, left-patriotic, people's democracy. Instead, half of the country-wide peasant republic was destroyed in a US-armed and directed reign of terror. By the time the Korean War started, around 100,000 people had been massacred in guerrilla fighting throughout the South.

The subsequent callous, random slaughter of awkward villagers, inconvenient refugees, mutinous prisoners, suspected malcontents and any other slow-moving citizens by South Korean troops and their American allies was carefully documented at the time by British reporters like James Cameron and René Cutforth. It has later been confirmed through eye-witness accounts by US generals and senior diplomats. General MacArthur's experience was by no means exceptional, except perhaps for the violence of his physical revulsion. Jon Halliday argues that 'South Korea was not invaded by North Korea in June 1950, it was invaded by US imperialism in 1945.'

Even the Left, he complains, still seems to imagine that the main issue is — 'Who started it?' Why does no one ask who started the Vietnam War?

Halliday's paper is one of 14 which explore the ramifications of the title in scholarly, yet often impassioned, style. There can be no doubting the percipient observation by an American analyst as long ago as 1967 — 'Our fear that Communism might someday take over most of the world blinds us to the fact that anti-communism already has.'

Tariq Ali's collection, **The Stalinist Legacy** (Penguin, £4.95), makes an admirable companion piece. Its critical examination, from a democratic socialist viewpoint, of dictatorial Communism in theory and practice is valuable ammunition against those Cold War commandoes who claim that only Stalinists could see a threat to peace and progress in anti-Communist orthodoxy. These studies of our own goals, or even worse, own gaols are often shaming (Krushchev's 'Secret Speech' in full) but usually salutary (an account of how the Trotskyists kept their solidarity and faith in a 1930s' gulag). And the range is exceptional: from Trotsky himself to Tito, Deutscher to Yevtushenko, though the most rigorous, alive and useful piece of them all is 'Was Lenin a Stalinist?' by Marcel Liebman, one of the editors, along with Ralph Miliband and John Saville, of *The Uses of Anti-Communism*.

Altogether, two invigorating, fibre-rich meals, worthy of strong intellectual teeth, especially welcome at a time when so much political discussion is diluted pap. It seems perverse however not to supply the reader, and especially the re-reader, of either book with the essential implement of an index.

An author-activist, writer-rebel, whose entire life embodied the Marxist identity of theory and practice was Victor Serge. In **Memoirs of a Revolutionary** (Writers & Readers, £6.95) almost all the preoccupations, dilemmas, temptations and challenges now discussed by historians and philosophers of the Left can be found acted out in the real life of an extraordinary man. Belgian-born of Russian parents, his first of many imprisonments was served in France for complicity in raids made by anarchist bandits. Expelled to Spain, he took part in the Barcelona rising of 1917 as syndicalist, ending up as a Bolshevik suspect in a concentration camp. Swapped for Soviet prisoners, he arrived in Petrograd in 1919, became a Communist and an official of the Comintern.

But believing, and proclaiming, Rosa Luxemburg's dictum that 'freedom is always freedom for the one who thinks differently', he was marked down for further arrests as Lenin's Russia became Stalin's. Briefly locked up in 1928, exiled to Central Asia in 1933, he was on the verge of being sucked under in the great purges of 1936 when he was saved by the protests of French Communist sympathisers such as Gide and Malraux. A whole new cycle of exhilaration, commitment and frustration came with the Spanish Civil War, where he fought both Stalinism and Fascism, an odd-red-out who also alienated the anarchists and the Trots.

After Franco's victory, he moved to Paris, leaving in 1940 as the panzers rolled into the suburbs, trekking south to join the Resistance. Unable to find refuge in any country influenced by the Anglo-American allies, because of Soviet pressure, he was granted a final home in Mexico. Here he died, lonely, poor and forgotten, in 1947, writing away but only things 'for my desk drawer'.

Memoirs of a Revolutionary is one of these, a book that is lived, both by reader and writer, in a fashion that it is hard to parallel. Also re-issued in paperback by Writers & Readers are three of Serge's novels which traverse events of his life familiar to those who have endured the splendours and miseries of his autobiography but never repeating or diluting the experiences — **Men in Prison** (£2.95), **Birth of our Power** (£2.95) and **Conquered City** (£2.95). No better education in how to survive among socialists and keep a human face can be imagined and I envy anyone who is reading Victor Serge for the first time.

Another novel for the desk drawer, which casts a wider net among both the victims and hatchet-men, is **The Case of Comrade Tulayev**, due out soon from Writers & Readers. □

Witness box

Bob Woffinden

Television
FRANCIS WHEEN *Century* £12.95

ON ELECTION night in October 1964, at 7.30 p.m., the BBC was due to transmit *Steptoe and Son*. This greatly perturbed Harold Wilson. The comedy show, then a relative newcomer, enjoyed vast popularity, and he thought that too many of his potential voters might stay in to watch it. Accordingly, he telephoned Hugh Greene, the BBC's director-general, who obligingly re-scheduled it for later in the evening.

Wilson was duly grateful. He explained to Greene that the BBC's flexibility could be worth 12 seats to him. In the event, he scraped home by four.

Just prior to the 1968 US presidential election, the producers of the top-rated show, *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In*, asked both candidates to make cameo appearances on the programme. Hubert Humphrey declined the invitation, and lost the election; Richard Nixon accepted and won, just.

Perhaps these anecdotes from **Television** demonstrate that there is indeed a nexus between the medium and the democratic process, but that it is not quite as straightforward as those who dissect the entrails

Cont'd on p.34

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Shorter reviews

Secret Agents in Fiction

LARS OLE SAUERBERG *Macmillan* £22.50

Popular literature has been the focus of burgeoning critical attention for some years. Book-length appraisals, though, still usually reflect a tendency to take its various forms more seriously than its various practitioners, being predominantly occupied with generic properties rather than with individual works on their own account. This is certainly true of *Secret Agents in Fiction*.

Sauerberg the academic is far more in evidence than Sauerberg the devotee of spy thrillers: he studies 'formula and variation' in 'the British secret-agent story', specifically the novels of Ian Fleming, John le Carré and Len Deighton, the outstanding figures on the postwar scene. Sauerberg begins by attributing five 'genre-distinctive' 'formula elements' to the modern British school:

> . . .a dichotomy structure reminiscent of romance, a characteristic concern for ethics, a fixed role structure metonymically arranged around the hero and his adversary, a formular plot consisting of a departure-and-return pattern and a series of ordeals in between, and, finally, a persistent thematic concern for the British loss of power in international affairs.

Then he compares and evaluates his triumvirate's 'responses to the formula requirements' in these areas. This decidedly mechanistic approach emphasises that the authors are not subjects proper, but mere representatives of a genre.

Working mainly at the level of broad generalisation, Sauerberg inevitably provides only fragmentary glimpses of individual novels. What's more, even at that level, his formulaic preoccupations mean that some essential features pass unconsidered: Fleming's use of factual detail, for instance — a key component of his style and a tremendous influence on other popular writers. What Sauerberg has to say about questions of 'structure' and 'pattern' is accurate enough, but pretty dry fare. Fortunately, he is not wholly concerned with such matters. Of greater interest are his examinations of the ethical values and the attitudes towards post-imperial Britain embodied in the books of the three. Nevertheless, give me something on the lines of Kingsley Amis's zestful *The James Bond Dossier* any day.

David Montrose

Countdown to Space War

BHUPENDRA JASANI and CHRISTOPHER LEE *Taylor & Francis* £4.95

As you might expect, Ronald Reagan's enthusiasm for space weaponry is not original. The US tested its first anti-satellite weapon in 1959, and now has a workable means of destroying satellites. At the same time, space is now the place for espionage and military communications. And this is before the scheme set out in Reagan's 'Star Wars' speech, in which he spoke of effective space-borne defences against missile attack, even gets going.

All this costs billions and is an important part of the arms race in general. Nevertheless, Jasani and Lee point out that there could be benefits, especially the use of satellites to monitor compliance with arms control treaties. But now the military uses of space are entering a new phase. The existing restrictions on space war are in danger of being swept away at the time they most need reinforcing.

In the coming decades, the US ambition is to test machines capable of operating an anti-missile defence. Unlike some critics, Jasani and Lee think that at least a partial defence is probably achievable. And, even if it is not, the effort of developing it will provide a highly effective anti-satellite weapon. This will make space into the front line of wars starting after, say, 1990. Lee and Jasani recommend strenuous efforts to ban space weapons altogether as the only alternative to this dangerous plan, although at the moment the US seems to be thoroughly opposed.

Jasani and Lee's book is the first of a series planned by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute to make its copious research findings more generally available. *Countdown to Space War* is a promising start.

Martin Ince

When Was Wales? A History of the Welsh

GWYN A. WILLIAMS *Black Raven* £12.95

Gwyn Williams, a most scholarly historian, has written a comprehensive critical history of the Welsh for the thoughtful layman. There has not been a scholarly one-volume history of Wales, or rather of the Welsh (a broader matter — even if less migrant than the Scottish and the Irish), for many a day and this lively but serious book is likely to prove standard.

Conquered and incorporated earlier than Scotland by its powerful neighbour, but never obliterated nor completely Anglicised, its story is also the story of the birth of a British state, after Bosworth field, from the dying feudal kingdom of England. English, who are insufficiently knowledgeable about precisely how the United Kingdom is a multi-national state, ought to have this excellent book thrust on them. Most of our political leaders seem to have forgotten how to practise the kind of politics that for almost three centuries has been needed to maintain the peculiar British federation of nations.

Gwyn Williams is most at home in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. He is especially interesting on the language question. Have recent moves towards equality of status of the two languages actually divided Wales as never before — the curse of Saunders Lewis? The political behaviour and popular culture of four-fifths of the Welsh might suggest so. The recent election left the populous areas almost indistinguishable from the English Midlands. Devolution was so decisively defeated in Wales largely due to fears of 'jobs for the boyos', the bi-lingual. Nationalism and national sentiment were not so riven in Scotland because no language issue divided separatists from devolvers. Williams ends on a kind of sad but still hopeful, rational pessimism for his people's identity and culture. Later this year Channel 4 will present a 13-part history of Wales of which he is co-author and co-presenter with Wynford Vaughan-Thomas. I look forward to that.

Bernard Crick

The Weller Way: The Story of the Weller Streets Housing Co-operative

ALAN McDONALD *unpublished Ms, Weller Streets Publishing Co.*

This account of the pioneer of the new-build co-ops in Liverpool has been rejected by nine publishers, including a well-known left-wing firm who 'admired the dedication of [their] struggle for independently managed decent housing', but could not see a profit in the book.

Just as their architect had been told that 'we design the houses and you hold the pen', so the author was briefed by the co-op. The text is based upon interviews and was revised by the members. It could easily have romanticised the story of how 60 working-class families in Liverpool 8 without experience or precedent planned their own housing estate. But the brief was for 'warts and all' and the internal tensions are not ignored: those between the women behind the original housing action group and their men who were goaded into taking part, and then took over the hard politics of steering the project to completion and of designing the outsides of the houses, leaving the women to the interiors or the baby sitting; or between the committee who rapidly became experts and the membership.

Bloody-mindedness, persistence and cunning carried them through major crises when members might have lost hope and dropped out. Self-scrutiny transformed design meetings into a keen political argument about how to live in the inner city, so that the estate, which looks quite straightforward to a casual visitor, embodies the co-op's idea of itself as a social entity.

I make it sound too earnest. From the start, when a jar of cockroaches was deposited at the Council ('If they're not claimed within three months, they're your own'), the enterprise was conducted with wit and bawdy irreverence.

This remarkable and readable book transcends its local interest by showing how the 'wealth of talent in Liverpool 8', or elsewhere, could transform the culture and economy of our country. One condition, however, is that groups like Weller Streets enjoy the same rights of access to publication as the chronicles of the Bloomsbury Group.

Jules Lubbock

Writers at Work

ed. GEORGE PLIMPTON *Secker* £12.50

'Ultimately, literature is nothing but carpentry,' says Gabriel Garcia Márquez. 'With both you are working with reality, a material just as hard as wood.' His interview is one of the 12 in *Writers at Work*, the sixth series of the *Paris Review* interviews. The effect of the whole book is like that of attending a very stimulating dinner party at which the distinguished guests all describe their attitudes to writing. Other writers will find some of their own perceptions and experiences in these interviews; everyone will find them full of first-hand descriptions of how creativity works. Stephen Spender is especially good on the way a poem takes form.

Tennessee Williams advises young playwrights above all never to bore the audience. 'Just keep the thing going any way you can,' he says, with what sounds like unnecessary desperation. Nadine Gordimer speaks with authority about how books are banned and unbanned in South Africa. She is interesting on the question of whether political oppression somehow improves a nation's literature. It seems true in South America, and Ms Gordimer recites her list — everybody's list — of the most exciting Spanish-American writers, including the two who appear later in this book. 'Those who say the novel is dead can't write them,' says Malamud tartly. To the question 'Why do you write?' William Goyen answers, 'I can't imagine *not* writing.'

On the process of writing, Bernard Malamud remarks, 'First drafts are for learning what your novel or story is about.' He finds revision 'one of the true pleasures of writing.' John Gardner goes over drafts of his work, 'making sure that it's as coherent and self-contained as a grapefruit'.

Full of wisdom and quirky opinions, this is a book to savour and reread.

Sarah Lawson

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of news and current affairs programmes tend to suggest. Francis Wheen, in this excellent book, doesn't claim as much; but he does provide a number of equally fascinating illustrations of the strange powers of television.

The book, prepared in conjunction with Granada's present TV series, has a Himalayan objective. It is simply to chart the course of television, throughout its history, throughout the world; from the time when it was a vision of the future in *Punch* cartoons, to the point where it has now become one of life's bare necessities. Even the most curmudgeonly of state bureaucrats no longer expects people to be able to survive without it.

Marshalling the vast amount of material must have presented considerable difficulties, but these have been smoothly overcome. Chapters are allocated to specific genres — drama; entertainment; news and current affairs, etc — and absorbing information about foreign programming arises naturally from these.

Without getting lost in discussion of the infinite social ramifications of television, Wheen still manages to cover considerable ground. Throughout it all he keeps a weather eye on the essential conundrum of television: the gulf between the glittering prospect and the generally tawdry reality. The ultimate mass medium, it is so complex and expensive that it almost has to be funded either by advertising or directly by the state, methods which are inherently inimical to creative programming. *Television* convincingly demonstrates that things could be much, much worse. But the book, accomplished though it is, is nevertheless open to some criticisms.

Granada, of course, has a justifiably proud record, but if the TV series displays the same orientation as this book then the company will be accused, not unreasonably, of feathering its own nest. The index shows that Granada has far more entries than the other four of the five major ITV companies put together. Poor Yorkshire is barely mentioned at all, its strong documentary tradition — *Johnny Go Home*, Rampton, *Alice: A Fight for Life* and *Windscale — the Nuclear Laundry* (from *First Tuesday*) — all but forgotten. Nor does London Weekend receive credit for chiselling out a permanent niche in the schedules for *Weekend World* and *The South Bank Show*.

There is a problem with the design, which undermines the handsome production since too many of the TV-shaped photographs are too small to be appreciated. I think, too, that the publishers should have refrained from trumpeting *Television* as 'the book of the major ITV series' when, as Wheen makes clear in his introduction, this is not strictly true.

Nor is it the case that Tony Hancock was 'a failure' after parting company with Sid James. On the contrary, his solo series — *The Blood Donor* etc. — was the most acclaimed of all.

It is, I know, ungenerous to carp about omissions, but it would have been relevant to mention BBC-2's *Did You See?*, since it is the first time that television has tried, on a regular basis, to be intelligent about itself. There should also have been some reference to the introduction of colour TV, which Harold Wilson expedited in the belief that it would win him the next election. That time, though, television did not come to his aid. □

FILMS

Point of departure

John Coleman

38 years into *Heimat* and 44 still to go, Maria (Marita Breuer, left) relaxes with her friend Pauline

Heimat (15)
Lumiere, from 16 February
Irreconcilable Differences (15)
Leicester Square Theatre
Ordeal by Innocence (15)
Classic, Haymarket

READING AND hearing advance reports on Edgar Reitz's **Heimat**, which lasts for nearly 15½ hours, I was uncharitable enough to wonder whether such unanimous and spendthrift praise might not contain its tiny element of self-congratulation for a marathon bout of viewing, a certain psychological plus for having made such a lengthy commitment of personal time. Now that I have seen most of it for myself — it is in eleven episodes and, alas, I missed the last two — this suspicion has been largely allayed: the event *is* quite extraordinary, compulsively watchable and something of a breakthrough for German cinema.

In fact, *Heimat* in its very title suggests some of the liberating complexities it may well carry for a German audience: the word, we are assured, means more than just 'homeland', has intimations of nostalgia and yearning, of a concept of emotional continuity. And the film, long in germination, 18 months in the shooting, substantially concentrates on life in the composite village of 'Schabbach', set in those wooded and agricultural acres of the Rhineland called the Hunsrück. The years, patrolled at various speeds and even in different styles, are between 1919, when young Paul Simon walks home from the wars and a POW camp wordlessly to drop his gear and join in with his blacksmith father, Mathias, at the forge, and 1982, when kinsfolk dead and alive reunite for the funeral of Maria, herself as old as the century and the girl-woman-old matriarch Paul is to marry, father children on and then abandon. If there is a focal point to the goings-on, it would surely be this Maria, wonderfully present in Marita Breuer's skin-tight performance.

Reitz takes enormous risks by his apparently free-form procedures. A relatively minor incident may be pursued in depth, a happening of world-shattering import be reflected glancingly, its repercussions trapped in prismatic glimpses or, as it were, asides dropped during domestic crises, village tragedies. This is why I suggested the sprawling movie might prove important to Reitz's fellow film-makers, a sort of beneficent Year Zero. The appalling phenomenon of Hitler's rise to power and its hideous outcome (explored in such painful re-creations as *Holocaust*) is not ducked in *Heimat*; rather, it is filtered through the quotidian experiences of its people. And these are, by and large, linked by ties of blood and marriage. Mathias and his shrewd peasant wife — a sort of Ma Joad out of *The Grapes of Wrath* at moments — have two children apart from the Paul who is to take off for America without warning, there to make his fortune: tubercular Eduard, despatched to Berlin and a cure, where he marries Lucie, a brothel madam who mistakes him for a rich landowner; and Pauline, who weds a prospering local clockmaker, Robert. Paul's deserted Maria is the daughter of cocky little Mayor Wiegand, a staunch Nazi sympathiser, who has also sired the wretched, sickly Wilfried, in due course the neighbouring SS commander and scourge.

As time passes, attention shifts to Maria's two sons by Paul. Anton grows from reluctant Hitler Youth member, to cameraman on the Russian front forced to fake a documentary about shooting partisans, to post-war thriving manufacturer of lenses. Ernst is eventually a pilot, then black marketeer and honest cynic

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who turns antique dealer. But Maria has another son as a result of a doomed affair with Otto, a genial engineer to die as a bomb disposal ace in the war. And, as if to underline how the arbitrary may be converted into the inevitable (which is, after all, what Reitz is committed to doing if his ambitious work is to engage us), the director devotes a whole film (episode nine) of 146 minutes to this brilliant young Hermann, the apple of Maria's eye. His equally ill-fated love affair with beautiful Klärchen, 12 years his senior, who has lived with the family since she turned up from nowhere one fine day despatched by pilot Ernst (subsequently to pay her no heed), is tenderly, bitterly, erotically conducted; and when his enraged mother and bullying stepbrother Anton threaten Klärchen with legal action, he prepares to leave home. Returns and departures have rightly been seen as recurring motifs in *Heimat*, sometimes echoing one another. History does repeat itself.

But history moves on, too, and that is where this extended, expansive film scores so triumphantly. Old grandmother Simon declares just before she dies she has lived through six 'new ages': after World War I, after inflation, 1933, the highway we see a-building in 1938, the 'zero hour' of 1945, and now what the papers are calling 'Day X'. And, by working so long on site, giving his actors — many of them amateurs — space and time to inhabit their roles, Reitz achieves an unusually convincing 'natural' background *and* foreground — as the characters age, alter for good or bad, behave and misbehave to the manner born. The blacksmith's forge looks used, a monument we see unveiled picks up familiarity down the years, technological advances creep into the known fabric.

And one comes back to the queen-pin Maria, who can act as unpleasantly as anyone else when her beloved Hermann is felt as compromised, threatened. From her trips with Pauline to the cinema to see Zarah Leander singing in Carl Froelich's 1938 *Heimat* (a very different business), the pair of them giggling afterwards as Pauline makes up gypsy-style; through her brief, loving passages with Otto; to her rejection of wealthy, stetson-hatted and black-chauffeured Paul in 1947 when he boastfully gives the villagers a feast and dance *and* speech, then — cold at night — tries to crawl into her bed ('You can't wipe out 20 years simply by shivering'), she holds a lot of the threads together — and when she dies, so does the film.

It is a part of the risks run so boldly that Reitz and his superb cameraman Gernot Roll should shift intermittently from black-and-white into colour. Mostly it works remarkably well, as when Paul at the opening first glimpses the glowing forge, a sticky yellow flypaper black with insects. Only rarely does it prove an italic distraction. Similarly, one carries away a hundred telling little details of gesture and dialogue. Ex-madam Lucie's irritation when one of her girls comes visiting at her grand villa and keeps calling her 'boss'. Again Lucie as she desperately seeks to ingratiate herself with some visiting Nazi high-ups. And yet, though she provides much barbed entertainment of a tacky order, always going with the prevailing wind, this Lucie's settling down with bumbling Eduard at all, once disabused about his wealth, takes some swallowing. As does a melodramatic later episode with that visiting whore back in ruined Berlin trying to comfort a dying husband. As does the whole, rather caricatural matter of Paul's short return 20 years on. These are minor criticisms of a major enterprise, which will be shown on BBC television in the autumn. Those within reach of the Lumiere are urged to catch it now. It comfortably fills the big screen.

Whereas Charles Shyer's first feature, **Irreconcilable Differences**, written by him and executive producer Nancy Meyers, would hardly warrant a rainy-night glance on the box. This presumptive entry into the comedy-tear-jerker stakes (*Terms of Endearment, Kramer vs Kramer*) has nine-year-old Drew Barrymore suing her horrible parents Ryan O'Neal and Shelley Long for divorce: poor little rich kid, mainly brought up by her Spanish-speaking nurse, has had enough of papa's neglect as he rises from UCLA prof who has done a thesis on semiological overtures in the early films of

Horrible parent Shelley Long

Ernst Lubitsch to director of two successful movies and a mega-flop musical version of *GWTW* starring the girl who bust up his marriage; of mama's ditto as *she* becomes the big money-spinner with a best-selling novel. A few good opening lines as O'Neal and Long meet, mate and marry soon fade from memory as the piece grows increasingly brittle and unengaging. O'Neal is unwisely allowed to remark, 'People don't want to leave a theatre feeling empty.' Add 'numb' and you've got it. As for **Ordeal by Innocence**, unfathomably directed by Desmond Davis, Miss Agatha Christie must be whirling in her grave. □

THEATRE

Laying waste

Benedict Nightingale

Better Times
BARRIE KEEFFE *Stratford East*
My Brother's Keeper
NIGEL WILLIAMS *Greenwich*

IN ALL THE ado about the closure of the Cottesloe, let's not forget that it's just one of many institutions, Riverside Studios to the 7:84 company, whose existence is imperilled by a fell combination of state parsimony and pinheadedness at 105 Piccadilly. *The Glory of the Garden*, as the Arts Council called its plan to shift some of its resources from London to the regions, always sounded a bit like adman's boastful rhetoric, given the actual needs of the gardeners and the high cost of anything remotely dignifiable as glory. The way it's working out, it might be the title of one of those sales leaflets put out by the real-estate sharks of *Glengarry Glen Ross* in order to persuade the gullible that dream-houses can be built on slices of Florida sod mainly populated by alligators.

But happy memories of *Glengarry* bring me back to Peter Hall's angry announcement. In all the ado about the closure of the Cottesloe, let's not forget the Cottesloe itself. When the National was first built, I was one of the moaners and carpers, much derided in Sir Peter's diaries, who wondered whether it was necessary at all. Better, surely, a company or series of companies out traversing the nation than a big cultural Oz grandly ensconced on the South Bank. Well, my scepticism seemed only too well justified at first, given the collapse of standards that followed the move from the Old Vic; but I've since felt obliged substantially to recant, for reasons that would range from the greater artistic consistency Hall eventually achieved to the appearance of the Barbican Centre. Beside that gaudy amalgam of Heathrow Airport and the Hilton Hotel, the National began to feel like a coupling of Biggin Hill and a coaching inn: a cosier, more hospitable place than we ever imagined.

It was a somewhat selective affection, though. One might respect the Lyttelton, and admire the Olivier, but it was the Cottesloe that really hit the emotional spot. Nor was that just because of its informality and adaptability, considerable though they both proved to be. There, Bill Bryden and his troops evolved something one would call a company style, if the phrase didn't imply a saminess, a predictability, as alien to their acting as to their offerings. David Mamet's *Glengarry* and *American Buffalo* were 'very Cottesloe', but so were *Lark Rise to Candleford* and *The Passion*, the theatre's pioneering 'promenade' productions. So was Bryden's adaptation of Michael Herr's *Dispatches* and Richard Eyre's *Beggar's Opera* and much, much else. It had to do with intellectual curiosity, unaffected seriousness, wry humour, directness of appeal. One could never be on first-name terms with the

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Olivier or the Lyttelton. One could imagine going on a sort of artistic pub-crawl with the Cottesloe, discovering in the process much that was fresh about the world and revealing about its past.

But why am I writing in the past tense? Partly out of fear that the Cottesloe will seem disposable to the mandarin minds which control our theatrical destinies; partly out of disbelief in the ways of raising new finance which are currently being enjoined on the National and others. Having just spent a year in New York, and seen at close quarters the dereliction of the American theatre, I'm highly sceptical about the wisdom of looking to the private sector for any sort of future, let alone a secure and fruitful one. Big business, or even small business, usually favours the conspicuous and glitzy; wealthy donors and subscribers tend to prefer the conservative and safe. Even if our tax laws were adjusted to make philanthropy more attractive, it wouldn't benfit the odd, the risky, the challenging, the controversial, the new. It might help *Rough Crossing* and the Lyttelton, or *Coriolanus* and the Olivier; never *Dispatches* and the Cottesloe. Only the regular injection of public money can keep a theatre like that alive and healthily kicking.

It would be easy to conclude from this that Hall has proved an inept butcher, or at least should have wielded his knife a little differently. Had he chosen to darken his 'prestige' auditoria for even a few months, he would have been more likely to embarrass his paymasters into increasing their grants than if he were permanently to transform the Cottesloe into an ice-rink; but while that expedient was tried, the National would have lost more box-office revenue than it would have saved costs, and so have ended still deeper in trouble. Fewer productions in the Olivier and Lyttelton, smaller production budgets, would probably still help — but how much, and at what artistic price? Wouldn't the more daring work be the first to be ditched, the less original and exciting tend to be retained? Anyway, who can be sure that a repertory of (say) six plays would fill as many seats and take as much money as an intelligently rotated repertory of ten? And would even *Guys and Dolls* have succeeded without that lavish set? The questions will continue to proliferate and the arguments to rage; but nothing should distract those who care about the arts from their primary duty, which is somehow, anyhow, by fair means and foul, to intensify the crusade for both the principle and the practice of state subsidy. If the Cottesloes and the Riversides and the 7:84s are allowed to disappear, the theatrical renaissance that began 30 long years ago must surely be doomed. You can't pour paraquat on your seeds and expect anything even remotely glorious to bloom in the garden above. ▷

billboard

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And what of the theatrical week, as opposed to the theatrical future? Well, it brought us two of our brighter left-wing dramatists, neither of them, alas, in exactly dazzling form. **My Brother's Keeper** is more private in emphasis than most of Nigel Williams's work, a family-reunion play superficially similar to David Storey's *In Celebration*. At any rate, the evening substantially consists of two siblings examining the past for spots and stains, then scrubbing, scouring, pummelling and wringing it like launderers run amok. Yet somehow neither the accusing nor the forgiving emotions so abundantly on display round Dad's deathbed acquire quite the plausibility and power they should. Indeed, the nearest to a living presence is the dying father himself, a retired thespian played by Reginald Marsh. His voice seems to be lugubriously rumbling up from some hidden crypt; his mushroom-face looks as if it was grown there; and there, or somewhere like it, is self-evidently where he'll be lying in a day or two.

Better Times is a more public and cheerful piece, indeed an attempt to remind the aggrieved and deprived, the rate-capped and bethatchered, that people have changed unjust laws by defying them. The result of the Poplar rate-strike of 1921 was imprisonment for George Lansbury and his fellow-councillors, but also fairer distribution of the financial burdens the London local authorities were expected to bear. It's a thinnish, plainish evening, a bit simple both in its identification of its villains (Herbert Morrison, the TUC and the Labour Party as well as Lloyd George) and in its discussion of the issues; but that doesn't mean that its earnestly emphasised parallels are without clout. Suppose Peter Hall were to withhold VAT from Customs and Excise. Suppose other grant-capped theatres were to follow. Who knows where it might all end? □

JAZZ

Counterpoint

Charles Fox

De Volharding Orchestra
Bloomsbury Theatre

COCKING a snook at the establishment — political or cultural, Tory or socialist, tyrannical or caring — is generally a worthwhile thing to do. When a group of Dutch musicians got together at the start of the 1970s, forming the ensemble they called De Volharding (it means 'perseverance'), they had something like that in mind. Their gesture was meant to challenge the way that music was performed — and organised — in the Netherlands. They moved outside the conventional circuit, turning up in youth centres, at universities, in bandstands; sometimes just in the open air. Musicians were drawn from both classical and improvised music. Boundaries were supposed to be broken down.

So far, so good. But dispensing with a conductor, as De Volharding did and do, might be seen as a more substantial point of principle if there were no rigorous rehearsals, with the appropriate composer in charge. As it is the 13 musicians stand on stage in a half-circle, faced by the pianist, Cees van Zeeland. His nods might be construed as ordering entries and exits as authoritatively as any pointing of a baton.

But that is a small quibble compared with the rigidity of a group that aims at musical flexibility. Maybe the ensemble is too large. Seven brass plus three reeds, flute, piano and bass can summon up a useful range of textures but get cumbersome when — as in Guus Janssen's 'Woeha' — a melodic line needs to be handed, more or less a note at a time, from one instrument to another.

Jokiness is an attractive aspect of the Dutch avant-garde. It surfaces agreeably in Misha Mengelberg's 'Dressoir (Sideboard)', evoking a shelf-full of familiar objects: tea cosy, dominos, biscuit-tin, wedding photo. A trombone slurs a sentimental tune, Bob Driessen's soprano saxophone ejaculates a flurry of notes — the only instance of jazz improvisation during the entire evening: which is odd for a band that contains several gifted free players. Some of Ellington's brass textures turn up in Cees van Zeeland's 'Lacune', but in isolation, abstracted from the kind of context that gives plausibility.

Closest to the Afro-American tradition is Louis Andriessen's 'On Jimmy Yancey', a tribute to one of the finest yet most restrained of boogie woogie pianists. It goes on for too long but has an affecting and atmospheric final section, with the piano backed up by just the three saxophones. (A pity the programme notes had to go in for half-baked protest, concocting an image of boogie woogie pianists having to play 'for hours on end entertaining the white bourgeoisie'. For most of his life Yancey worked as a groundsman at the Chicago White Sox baseball park, performing almost exclusively at black clubs in and around State Street — although he did get to Carnegie Hall in 1948.)

A few composers strike political attitudes. Louis Andriessen's 'Y Despues? (And Then . . .)', sombre and processional, castigates Allende's dictatorship in Chile. Klas Torstensson's 'Järn (Iron)' is ostensibly about the division of labour. Nica Schuyt's 'Discorsi, discorsi' attempts a musical parallel to democratic discussion. All a bit heavy going, especially when compared with, say, Charlie Haden's use of Spanish Civil war tunes or Carla Bley's more sardonic forays. But readers wishing to check up for themselves still have a chance if they live near Bristol, for De Volharding give the final concert of their Contemporary Network Tour this Saturday (16 February) at the Arnolfini Gallery. □

English centrality

Philip Harrison

Consider the Greek 'e', epsilon,
Consult your reference books that you may find
Your earlier selfhoods and identities.

I consider Percy Bysshe Shelley to be
One of the greatest living poets and
Totally agree with Doctor Johnson
That his diction is superlative.

I never travelled to Stratford-upon-Avon;
Instead I met a man who came,
So he said,
From Northern Italy and lived 'in trees'.

Tresses of hair are hanging from the trees
And history is taped, spliced and edited.

I have my fellow-travellers though —
I grafted shale and slate into 'illegitimum non carborundum'.
It was quite an achievement,
And in my twentieth year of centuries
I wrapped my sister's locket
In a bladder and preserved it in 'garum.
But the bronze eroded and changed to green blotches.

In fine, Traherne was poet and seer of the landslide,
As Milton was spokesman for the pre-lapsarian age.
Personally I prefer Herbert and the Culpeper;
I eschew the floods from Warwickshire
And no long have wishes to discuss
The commingling of blood, ash, rose, honey, seeds
With Henry James. His ghost, do you see?
Has left the country.

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For ever young

Jeremy Lewis

IT'S PROBABLY fair to assume that the vast majority of the 'thinking' classes — a group that prides itself (often quite wrongly) on its fearless ability to distinguish wood from trees and a rather smug refusal to have the wool pulled about its collective eyes — regards the very idea of the afterlife as evidence of an almost clinical softening of the brain, a child-like credulity or a feeble inability to face up to the bleakness of the world as it really is. The iconography of everlasting life has declined from the great altar-pieces of mediaeval Europe to cartoons in which the recently deceased — looking suspiciously like tired businessmen off the 8.15 from Chislehurst who have traded in their pinstripes and briefcases for togas and clip-on wings — balance uneasily on individually crafted clouds and, harps in hand, comment in jocular vein on the goings-on here below; and, whereas Trollope's Warden Harding no doubt cherished a modest expectation of Eternal Reward, it's unlikely that an up-to-the-minute C. of E. vicar would have truck with anything so patently irrelevant to the great issues facing the caring society of today.

And yet one of the pleasing ironies of life in our irreligious age is that our inability to believe in heaven and hell has been accompanied by a curious revival of that most futile and tantalising of heresies, the promise of earthly immortality. This appalling yet ever-enticing idea is, no doubt, as old as the human race: certainly it pops up all over the place, from *Peter Pan* and the Flying Dutchman to Rider Haggard's *She* and James Hilton's Shangri-La, from magic gardens in which the young never grow old to glum tales of diabolical retribution in which unhappy, guilt-wracked pensioners roam the world for all eternity, a dreadful warning to us all. But whereas immortality always used to be reserved for the particularly good, the particularly wicked or the particularly rash, modern man seems to be slipping into the unkind but seductive delusion that if he or she takes particular care over such matters as diet and exercise — keeping an envious and imitative eye on those whiskered and unarithmetical old gentlemen from the Caucasus who live off yoghurt and nuts and claim to have been born shortly before the Crimean War — life everlasting, or at least the next best thing, may be at hand.

The idea that immortality is both desirable and achievable seems to be at its strongest — or at least its most lurid — in America. Those melancholy individuals who put their spouses on ice with strict instructions to reheat in a hundred years time when (it is hoped) medicine will have overcome the dreary facts of illness and bodily decay probably represent the lunatic fringe. Almost as sad and self-deluding — at least to those of us who find people's faces more interesting and better-looking as they grow older — are those over-bright old timers who grin out at us from American soap operas in

Camera Press

Joan Collins/Alexis Carrington: fuelling the American dream of eternal youth?

wretched parodies of youth, their teeth an unnatural, lunar white, their eyes glistening like chunks of turquoise beneath their tinted contact lenses, their chins lifted and lifted yet again, like sails forever breaking loose, the carefully planted hairs of an unpersuasive transplant marching across their scalps in all-too-regular lines, like Forestry Commission pinetrees on some blighted Scottish hillside.

Mocking such absurd manifestations of the American way of life and death is a familiar and facile enough pursuit: yet it has often occurred to me that — over and above a perfectly sensible desire to keep fit and well and to do what can be done to keep the coronary at bay — our current obsession with physical fitness, with the air we breathe and the things we touch, and with the food we should or (more importantly) should not eat is tinged by a nagging, pathetic hope that we can not only live longer, healthier lives, but even outwit death itself. Death is all about us, and not just on our television screens: and yet, like those listless agnostics who cherish a secret hope that God will provide conclusive proof of his existence before it gets too late — filling the sky like a bearded man-in-the-moon, thundering forth Commandments on a gigantic celestial tannoy and rendering Faith redundant at a stroke — we try to persuade ourselves that, by the time our turn comes, our old enemy may yet have been put to flight.

Making the world safe for immortals — or at least for sprightly centenarians — isn't simply a matter of medical advances, of spare-part surgery and victorious advances (of which I'm a grateful beneficiary) against cancer or heart disease. Life itself, it seems, is becoming more and more of an obstacle race, in which the prudent prolonger of existence will devote inordinate time and energy to avoiding an ever-expanding array of man-traps, from cigarettes and animal fats to such obvious unpleasantnesses as pesticides, asbestos and the municipal water supply. Every day brings us news of the hidden menace that lurks in carrots or cheese or an inoffensive game of golf, of the lethal properties inherent in every pleasure known to man. The only answer, perhaps, is to spend one's days in a germ-free, accident-proof plastic box, eating organically-grown vegetables, taking a spin on the bicycling machine, avoiding any possibility of being knocked down by a bus, waiting for death to liberate us from a parody of life. □

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Naseem Khan

New's room

ONE DOOR under the arches below the seawalk parade has a neat notice on it: Brighton Explorers' Club. It's an apt neighbour for the next-door Zap Club whose founders have braved condensation, rats and penury to set up a club that could equally be well termed an exploration.

For a start, there are no useful boundary lines. Cabaret? Night club? Performance art venue? It's all of those. If you go there on a Sunday afternoon when it offers classical music ('Free newspapers. Kids OK,' says their publicity kindly) the clientele will be different from that on Friday (Rock Music) or Wednesday (Lydia Lunch, John Dowie, Molly Parkin) or Thursday (video scratchings). You could argue that what Neil Butler and his colleagues are doing is simply sensible programming: attracting a variety of audiences for a variety of mutually exclusive events. If that were so, Butler would probably feel he had failed. The point of the club, which existed peripatetically around Brighton for six years before it at last acquired its own premises just before Christmas, is to create a flexible mix: a setting where new ideas and art forms can slide in unobtrusively and catch people unawares. It offers a venue for artists, from cabaret to performance, that is virtually unique in its blend since the days of Richard Strange's Slammer and Cabaret Futura.

But do artists want such a mix? Butler, an angular, energetic 31-year-old, set himself up bravely in a debate at last year's Performance Art Showcase in Nottingham. Can performance art be popular, it asked provocatively. Yes, said Butler (a performance artist — among other things — himself). The market place had positive benefits; it brought in new audiences and more critical attitudes. It could stimulate, broaden, energise. 'Our intentions are simple,' says the club's handbook, 'to support all that is new and innovative in the performing arts; to provide performers with the best possible facilities and environment that our finite resources can supply; to make work accessible to as wide an audience as possible; to create new audiences.'

The club itself inhabits a couple of slightly squashed arcades on the sea front. The shingle beach crunches up against its doorstep; to right and left at night are shadows of West and Palace Piers. Inside it is dark and friendly. The two long, connected vaults house a bar and sitting area on one side and performance area with a tiny end stage in the other. Its capacity is around 200 and, when I was there on a bitterly cold Tuesday night (which is different from Sunday or from Thursday. . .), the place was full until the early hours.

The audience that night was young — mainly under 25 — and spikey-haired; 'art college,' said one of Butler's colleagues. 'Audience' is hardly an apt word, for Tuesday night is participation night — join in, present your act. If you do, you get in free, but apart from that there is no structure and no programme. The compere, musician Ian Smith, dives regularly off the stage into the audience in search of performers. No one knows what will happen next — comedian, dancer; good, bad or awful. It gives, said Smith approvingly later, a slight edge of danger that he quietly encourages. There was no shortage of performers the night I was there, though it didn't touch the pre-Christmas night when out of an audience of 80, 60 emerged as would-be performers. On this night, between 9.30 and midnight, 33 people offered themselves up: a few stand-up comedians, several performance arts acts of varying degrees of obscurity, several satirists and, sandwiched among them ('Variety is the spice of life,' he told the audience defiantly), a classical pianist — and why not?

With two exceptions, the mixture was watched with sympathy and attention (the air of chance makes you want people to succeed). Tolerance, however, went only so far. A young man who did a cod strip ending up exposing a penis of the strangest dimensions ('It's quite real — you can touch it if you like') found no takers, and another man who unwisely told a very bad joke about a blonde, a negligée and a milkman was nearly booed off stage. Long after, debate raged in the bar. Was it sexist? Should racist/sexist jokes be banned? No, said Neil, people should talk to the performers afterwards; walking out, as four women had done, achieved nothing. Not everyone agreed. But the ability to argue and debate is, Neil believes, what makes the difference between Zap Club and London audiences. *Performance Magazine* quotes him appositely as saying of London audiences that they

> would not discuss what they were seeing, because they were afraid of looking stupid. If you set up a place that's really open, anyone can talk about it, you're not going to be laughed at if you say the wrong thing, then you really develop work, because artists will come off stage and people will say what they found interesting but why did they do that? I bet nobody asked any questions about their work in those London clubs. Anything that mystifies is bad. If people mystify their art the first question is 'Why?'; And the usual reason is that it's crap.

Zap may claim that their aims are 'simple'. What is likely to prove complex, however, is the finance. The bar makes money. The artists (however popular) don't. Economic logic in an overdraft situation could point to playing safe. (And what a lovely place for yet another disco.) It would be worth the while of funding bodies to protect a rare venue for new work and new audiences. □

Among this week's contributors:

BEN OKRI has published two novels, *Flowers and Shadows* and *The Landscape Within*. He is currently working on his first collection of short stories.

CHRISTOPHER HIRD is the author of *Challenging the Figures: A Guide to Company Finance and Accounts* (Pluto, 1983).

TELEVISION

Hugo Williams

Hell

MODERN WAR can only be waged by very stupid people with a poor grasp of reality. That was the gist of **The Theatre of War** (BBC-2), a coldly prophetic and devastating lecture by ex-US military official William Kincade. To make war today, it seems, you have to believe that there are two sides still and that you are on one of them: a frightening and childlike theory that is lining up to be the death of us.

What has happened is that advances in surveillance technology have sealed the two sides in a mutual paranoia pact; like the two sides of the atom, they will one day split over each others' heads. Neither side can ever gain the upper hand because both are peering constantly over the other's shoulder in class. The foreseeable result is that both invariably come top at the end of term; or bottom, rather. It is their imbecile belief that improvements in intelligence gathering will one day bring supremacy to their half of this Tweedledum/di binary block. In fact, the new stealth technology (practised by both Tweedles in a game of grandmother's footsteps for two stalkers and a ghost) means that intelligence cribbing can no longer be relied upon with anything like the degree of certainty needed to maintain the status quo.

'What we are competing with is not the Soviet Union, but the *image* of the Soviet Union, reflected in a dark mirror,' said Kincade. As with schizophrenics and new born babes, choosing what is real and what is an electronic ghost is immensely difficult 'and always leaves room for doubt' in minds drained of common sense by unthinkable contingencies. In a world where doubt is futurespeak for extinction, confusion heightens fear. As the likelihood of losing control of conventional warfare increases, so does the temptation to go nuclear, as drunkenness can lead a man to kill his baby son. (But try telling him that.) In a 'Decapitation attack' the old electro-magnetic pulse blinds the 'brain' 'controlling' the war and it stumbles into the final solution out of panic. Jolly. 'This is what makes future warfare so uncertain,' said Kincade uncertainly. In other words, the more control the two Tweedles have over their rattles, the less they have over our future and the world's.

Kincane's message was unutterably bleak and his closing optimism, a token to calm the insomniacs among us, was spoken without the eloquence or conviction he had reserved for our liquidation. The negotiating process is a necessary continuum, he told us, for reducing technology-creep, which itself prevents arms control. It is not numerical supremacy which counts, but the reduction of *threats*. To inform us that political leaders must reassert control over military technology was like saying 'You boys really must learn to behave yourselves' and seemed to ignore the more reasoned prognosis which had gone before.

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The programme was a deadening experience which most people will have avoided by not-watching the even more deadly **British Record Industry Awards** (BBC-1 for some reason) in which a tawdry and greedy business slapped itself on the paunch for yet another year of tasteless and talentless Euro-pap. It was not a pretty sight, or sound, although I suppose the caviar-encrusted biscuit was taken by something called 'Prince', a prinked, pampered and permed American disco queen, who approached the stand to receive his certificate of mediocrity accompanied by two grotesque bouncers in wrestling outfits. One assumed these were the musicians who had played the difficult bits on his suety records.

'Thank you, God,' said the po-faced Prinny as he accepted his award, implying that God's notoriously lousy taste in music had somehow been vindicated by media hype, payola and sordid market imperatives. I'm not a modern heavy metal fan, but the piss-elegant frumpery and trumpery of the occasion made me long for Lemmy Motorhead to burst upon the scene with his telecaster in overdrive... or a machine gun.

'We're not the kind of person who goes out kicking old ladies,' said a heavy metal biker in 'The Outcasts' on **Forty Minutes** (BBC-2). 'We did that 14 years ago.' This old-established gang of chaps live on the dole in Yarmouth and rely on dope and booze to recapture swinging boyhoods. 'I let them take as much speed as they like so long as they don't shoot up,' said a zonked form-master type in chrome Nazi headgear. 'I catch someone with a needle in his arm I break it off.' Good idea, my man. Keep up the good work.

Periodical Hell's Angels horrorshows on telly are one of the nation's placebos. They're what help us stay 'sober and industrious' as Philip Larkin said in 'Poetry of Departures'. I liked the Outcast funeral executive who had become a mortician because he wanted to 'wear flash clothes and do something where you didn't have to be intelligent'. I wish I'd thought of that. To celebrate their release from prison on a social security rap The Outcasts throw a fire party in which a member accidentally loses half his head (the top half).

Someone whose head was virtually wholly destroyed was French cameraman Jean Montgrenier, who was brought back from the dead after a truck backed into his car in the snow. His brain was severely damaged, his face was shattered, his right side was paralysed and he could neither see, nor speak, nor understand language when he was given back his appalling, frightened consciousness.

I was slow to grasp the fact that this shocking and miraculous film, **Beyond Sorrow, Beyond Pain** (BBC-2) was not the usual drama-documentary job with additional dialogue and gore. No, it was made by Jean's girlfriend, Agneta Elers-Jarleman, and starred herself and the shattered Jean, standing as naked as it is possible to stand in this world. When Jean regained consciousness all he could do was scream 'Whee-whee-whee-whee' in an unearthly treble that rang through the film like the cry of a lost sheep. Jean was terrified by his injuries, which he had no way of understanding.

His girlfriend Agneta stuck by him for five years, fighting to get him into a rehabilitation centre and making this film of herself in the process. I suppose the saddest love scene I have ever watched was her and Jean going to bed together on one of his days out: Agneta undresses, revealing her breasts to us, but not to Jean, whose heavy body has trouble understanding the bed. 'Move further up', says Agneta patiently, 'you're too far down.' The lights fade on desolation and waste.

By the end of the film Jean has achieved some kind of stability. He can write with his left hand. He writes 'Jean Paul Belmondo' on his wall, an actor he used to look like, then a heart with '*Amour*' for Agneta. What should the film be called, she asks him. 'Blind', he explains, pointing to his eyes with two fingers and describing a rictus on his mirthless, staring face. □

Weekend competition

No 2860 Set by E.O. Parrott

To help us through the rest of this dismal season, could we have cheery verses in praise of influenza, the common cold or any other winter ill? Max. 12 lines by 27 Feb.

No 2857 Set by Maud Gracechurch

Verses for anti-Valentine cards addressed to public figures.

Report By Ernest Oswald fflap

'Those awful policies! That voice!/I'm sure you'll be most compers' choice./May you get so many rhymes/You get this headline in *The Times*:/"SO MANY ANTI-VALENTINES/ THAT MAGGIE THATCHER NOW RESIGNS." ' Ah, C. Fever, what a pipe dream. Would that the world (or indeed *The Times*) were thus. The simpler faith of your second line, however, I can confirm: the Lady in Charge was the addressee of almost one-third of your verses. Other multiple bile-provokers were the Rev. Ian Paisley, Arthur Scargill, Nigel Lawson, David Owen, Keith Joseph and Victoria Gillick. Less expected were the ventings of spleen on Colin Welland (what *can* he have done?), the cast of *Crossroads*, Margery Proops and Princess Michael of Kent. You were all at least as nasty as we'd hoped: those below, not to mention C. Fever, will receive ten sovereigns per head, with a Special Mention to Bernard J. Balkin for his *interesting* presentation.

To Mrs Thatcher
(after Robert Burns)

In nineteen hunder 'n twenty-five
Auld Satan tuik a witch tae wive —
For evil nane cuid match her.
But when they spied the babe they'd got
They froze wi' horror tae the spot:
An' ca'd it Margaret Thatcher.

NOEL PETTY

My dear Sir Robin, are you double-jointed
And so equipped to kiss the rich man's arse
As if the wealthy were the Lord's anointed
While giving members of the working class
The haughtiest and chilliest of shoulders?
I cannot say I hope to make you mine,
Most smug and unctuous of opinion-moulders:
A toad would be a better valentine.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

To Brian Walden

Every Sunday at noon
It's getting a fight
To try to keep down
What I've eaten last night.

As you wead the weports
Of the week just gone by,
Sucking up to the centre
In your little pink tie.

GEOFF WARREN

To William Whitelaw

Oh William, with your bagwash face,
Your prissy mouth, your droopy eyes,
Your phlegmy speech, your lack of grace,
You are the one I most despise.
So on this day of Valentine
Please take your shotgun from the shelf
And let unbounded joy be mine
As you go and shoot yourself.

KATIE MALLETT

To Paul Daniels

Dear Paul, please grant my modest plea:
You owe it to a grateful nation
To waive, for once, the monstrous fee
You charge for prestidigitation.
For me, perform this cunning stunt
(With which you will yourself surpass):
Just wave your hand, you smarmy runt,
And vanish up your tiny arse.

PETER NORMAN

To Mr Michael Parkinson

It isn't that you're such a creep,
It isn't that you're charmless,
It's just that you've made such a heap
By merely being harmless.

TONY PLEET

I do not love thee, Selwyn G.
The reason why is plain to see:
Thy schoolboy features jar and grate,
Thy earnestness I roundly hate.

I too was born in '39.
Why looks my visage not like thine?
Thy youth is like eternal Summer,
Inept, inane, God-awful Gummer.

ALASDAIR MAC ALASDAIR

Pompous, Churchill-aping swine,
Swelling daily, while the line
Queuing for the dole increases:
May you drown in your own faeces.
Whoreson Lawson, hate o' mine,
Be my anti-Valentine.

EVE RYMAN

To Shurley Williams

Dear Shurl, this Valentines for you,
(Though god, your no sensation),
And if its badly wrote, please blame
My crappy education.

RON RUBIN

Turds and gob and puke and snot,
Halitosis, boils and piles:
Compared, Maggie, with what you've got,
Their charm beats yours by miles.

V. ERNEST COX

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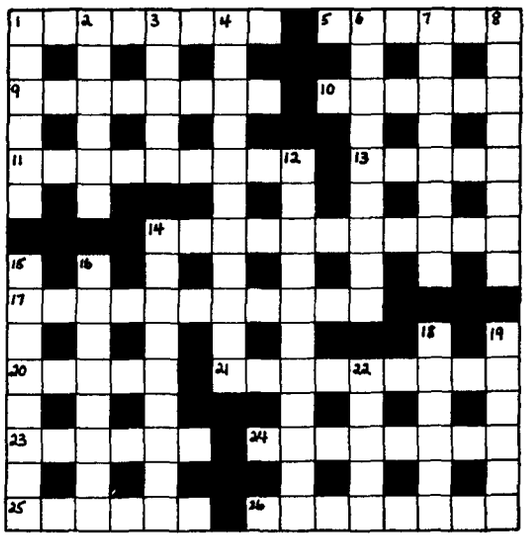
Weekend Crossword 1469

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1469, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 26 February.



ACROSS

1. These schoolboys are kept in and possibly bear rods (8)
5. What is magical in Miss Muffet is hard to see (6)
9. Cardinal assembly (8)
10. Give up being good when surrounded by backward children (4,2)
11. Concerning a ruler with untidy hair and no cap (9)
13. Like one who is jousting (5)
14. Article of clothing which puts the lover first (11)
17. Prove badly brought up and too highly regarded (11)
20. Give everything back without thanks for everything (5)
21. What to wear when one has to be involved with reading (9)
23. Measure behind the bed for the material (6)
24. Beat fellows with lines on curves (8)
25. A breach in the disc his mate repaired (6)
26. Journalist sees dirt being broadcast (8)

DOWN

1. Two-headed muscle (6)
2. Turn hot and cold like a girl followed by a beginner (6)
3. Was ill if she got up (5)
4. If one left this centre of industry one would discover birds on a cliff (11)
6. It has a mixed centre and is filled with delight (9)
7. Not an obvious way to make the child legal (8)
8. Get on well although show violence towards a single member of the upper classes (3,2,3)
12. Fed up about an animal being what food is served on (11)
14. Corsican coins? (9)
15. Intermediaries show that the opposition are without skill in dealing with others (8)
16. Others have an urge to do the needlework again (8)
18. One's beloved may appear different in face (6)
19. Contracts as in shelters (6)
22. It sounds like a piece of ceremony for the tories (5)

SETSQUARE

★ Classified Ads ★ Phone 01-251 5487 ★

FINANCIAL

IMMEDIATE ADVANCES £100-£25,000. Written terms on request. Regional Trust Ltd, 31 Dover St, London W1A 4RT. 01-491 2934.

LOANS £1,000-£20,000 in 10 days (secured). Also 100% **Mortgages** (Building Society) 3½ × income. Hometown 01-446 5451.

SALARIED PERSONS Postal Loans Ltd. Loans from £50. 175 Regent Street, London W1. *For written quote apply: Tel. 01-734 1974.*

THERAPY

*EXPERIENCED, CARING PSYCHO-*THERAPISTS. 01-794 6810, 01-586 4109, 01-883 5418.

PSYCHOTHERAPY AND COUNSELLING: phone Roger Horrocks 01-385 4091.

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BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK. Comfortable cottage, sleeps 5-7, views, birds, rivers, hill-walking, pony-trekking, piano, radio/gram. Tel. 0272 736794.

CHEAPEST FARES. Paris, Caracas, Port of Spain, Singapore, Sydney, Hong Kong, Jo'burg, Nairobi, Istanbul, anywhere. *Fareplan, 60-66 Wardour Street, W1. 01-734 9772.*

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LUXURY CHEAP HOLIDAYS!

Rent or exchange a family home in **Holl., France, Italy, Europe, USA,** etc. Large internat. circle of teachers, MDs. Letting of your (2nd) home, paying guest arrang. also possible. **Drs N.S. Binkhuysen, Home Holidays, POB 279, 1900 AG Castricum/Holland.**

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Considerable reductions for groups of 6 or more

Write for our 1985 BROCHURE. NOW!

Please inform us which country you wish to visit.

LENINGRAD via GDR £190 30 March/11 April/ 27 July/8 August

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Huddersfield HD1 3JQ.
Tel: 0484 24269

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AUDIO/COPY typing, word processing. Neat, efficient, competitive. Jenny Burke: 01-892 8929.

BAKER STREET AREA accommodation address. Mail held/forwarded. Telephone message service. Contact: Eileen of Pembroke 01-258 1950. Established 1973.

PIANO TUNER and repairer. Denys Parsons MSc. turns up punctually. NW3/5/11; N2/6/8/10/19 only. 01-340 4695.

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THE TYPING POOL a women's co-operative. Professional low cost typing of articles, thesis, letters etc. from script or tape. Translation and typing of French, German, Spanish and Italian. Central London. Tel: 01-430 0381.

ACCOMMODATION

ACADEMICS VISITING. We have furnished *flats near British Museum and Universities* — Helen Watson & Co. 01-580 6275.

DRISCOLL HOUSE Hotel, 200 single rooms, £55 per week, partial board. Apply 172 New Kent Rd, London SE1 4YT. 01-703 4175.

APPOINTMENTS

SOUTH WEST/ SOUTH WALES

REGIONAL ORGANISER

A small specialist Trade Union in the Licensed Trade is seeking a second Regional Organiser for the above Region.

Application Forms may be obtained by writing to:

Mr Les Adams
National Secretary
National Association of Licensed House Managers
9 Coombe Lane, Raynes Park
London SW20 8NE

CLOSING DATE for receipt of completed application forms is: **First Post Friday 15 March 1985.**

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APPOINTMENTS

FABIAN SOCIETY

GENERAL SECRETARY

Applications are invited for the above post.

Salary **£12,500-£15,500** p.a.

Full details plus application form from

Fabian Society
11 Dartmouth Street
London SW1H 9BN
Tel. 01-222 8877
Closing date 8 March

EQUALITY OFFICER

Due to the temporary secondment of ACTT's Equality Officer to other duties, ACTT requires an Equality Officer to be appointed on a fixed term contract until 31 December, 1985.

Application forms and further details are available from:
Alan Sapper, General Secretary, ACTT, 2 Soho Square, London W1V 6DD.
Telephone 01-437 8506.

The final date for the submission of completed applications is 28 February 1985.

GLC
Working for London

Safeguarding Londoners from the hazards of industrial accidents

Flixborough, Seveso and most recently Bhopal vividly and tragically illustrate the horrifying price people pay for major industrial disasters.

The GLC is determined to ensure that, if a similar disaster happens in London, under the "Control of Industrial Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1984", there will be full plans to cope.

The GLC is a Nuclear Free Zone authority and is committed to expanding its services to Londoners wherever and whenever a major peacetime disaster occurs.

Team Leaders & Emergency Planning Officers

We want to recruit women and men experienced in emergency planning to work in two teams. The teams will draw up off-site emergency plans in collaboration with a wide range of authorities. They will develop accident and public information systems, organise test exercises and train others involved.

Two Team Leaders are to be appointed. They will supervise and direct their team and lead the negotiations with all concerned to ensure fully co-ordinated emergency plans. Team Leaders should possess experience of project management and staff supervision.

All posts call for a working knowledge of local and central government organisation, public utilities and emergency services, plus the confidence and ability to deal face to face with people throughout industry and the public sector. First rate organisational skills, plus the ability to work under pressure and without direct supervision are needed.

Secondments to the GLC, with present employers' agreement will be considered.

Salaries: Team Leaders – £14,781 – £16,545 inclusive Ref: 5286. **Emergency Planning Officers – £13,065 – £14,781 inclusive.** Ref: 5287.

LONDON AGAINST RACISM

The GLC is an equal opportunities employer. We invite applications from women and men from all sections of the community, irrespective of their ethnic origin, colour, sexual orientation or disability, who have the necessary attributes to do the job.

For an application form, to be returned by 1st March 1985, write to: GLC Director-General's Department, Room 203, The County Hall, SE1 7PB or telephone 01-633 1527.

These posts are suitable for job sharing

OV SELECTION *have a number of vacancies* for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

PERSONAL

FOR A LUXURY Massage in Central SW1 please phone 01-630 1941.

LISTINGS

THURS 14 FEB

LONDON 'The Victoria Gillick Ruling' Spkrs. Rose Shapiro, Caroline Woodruff, Tess Woodcraft. 8pm North Library, Manor Gdns, N7. Org. Marxism Today/Islington Communist Party. **Details: Martin Jacques 01-608 0265 (eves).**

LONDON 'Protect us from Enoch! No return to the kitchen! Defend abortion & contraception rights. 7.30 p.m. St Pancras Library Meeting Rm, 100 Euston Rd, NW1. **Details: Carol Taggart 01-729 0414.**

FRI 15 FEB

LONDON Aid & Bangladesh. 6.30pm Montefiore Centre, Deal St, E1. **Org. Bangladesh Solidarity Cttee/Tower Hamlets International Solidarity, Oxford Hs, Derbyshire St, E2 6HC.**

LONDON 'Protect us from Enoch! No return to the kitchen! Defend abortion & contraception rights. Protest. 9am House of Commons.

SAT 16 FEB

LONDON Concert in aid of Ruth First Memorial Trust. 7.30pm St James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, W1. **Details: 01-734 4511.**

SUN 17 FEB

LONDON 'Anti-Semitism & European Jewry Today' by Michael May. 8pm 56 Lymington Rd, NW6. **Details: MAPAM 01-624 4906.**

MON 18 FEB

LONDON 'The Future of London' series at St. James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, W1. 1.05pm Beatrix Campbell on 'The Sexual Politics of Living in the City'. **Details: 01-734 4511.**

LONDON 'Peace Movement in Eastern Europe' by Jan Schling of Charter 77. 7.30pm Torriano Meeting House, Torriano Ave, NW5. **Details: S. Camden CND Peter Langan, 34 Albert St, NW1. 01-380 1534.**

TUES 19 FEB

LONDON 'Implications of Warnock', 6.30pm House of Commons, Committee Room 8. Spkrs: Anne Kingsbury, Helene Hayman. **Joint orgs: SHA/Nat. Labour Women's Ctte.**

WED 20 FEB

LONDON 'Labour & the Media' by John Lloyd. 8pm 267 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19. **Org. Wimbledon Labour Party.**

MANCHESTER AGM of Manchester branch of Labour Cttee. on Ireland. 7.30pm Barnes Wallis Building UMIST, Sackville St. All Labour Party members welcome. **Details: 061 442 9321.**

THURS 21 FEB

LONDON Rally for the Miners with Betty Heathfield, Dennis Skinner MP, Alan Gascoyne (Brnch. sec. Shirebrook NUM). 7.30pm Poplar Civic Theatre, Bow Rd, E3. **Ord. Tower Hamlets Miners Support Cttee.**

BASILDON 'Working against the Odds' by Rodney Bickerstaffe, Gen. Sec. NUPE. 7.30pm Pitsea Leisure Centre. **Org. Labour Party, 3 Rectory Rd, Pitsea.**

LAMBETH Rally for the Miners with John Neilson, Gordon McLennan. Music by Frankie Armstrong. 7.30pm Lambeth Town Hall. **Org. Lambeth Communist Party.**

LONDON Lunchtime picket at Saatchi & Saatchi, 80 Charlotte St, NW1. 1-2pm to protest against recruitment of mining engineers for South African company SASOL who sacked 6000 striking black miners. Called by **Poly of Central London Anti-Apartheid Grp.**

FRI 22 FEB

LONDON Release Nelson Mandela Now! 24-hr picket of South African Embassy, Trafalgar Sq. Assemble 5.30pm. **Org. City of London Anti-Apartheid Grp. 01-836 6050.**

LONDON 'Northern Ireland: Beyond the Forum' with Peter Archer & Mary Holland. 7-9pm tonight (10am-5pm Sat) at Islington Town Hall. Adm. £2.50 membs/£3.50 non-membs. **Org. Fabian Society 01-222 8877.**

LONDON 'Young Woman Talking' – women only welcome. 7.30pm Tolmers Sq. Community Centre, Foundry Mews, NW1. Disabled access, creche, refreshments. **Org. Housewives in Dialogue. Details: Kings Cross Women's Centre, 71 Tonbridge St, WC1 01-837 7509.**

SAT 23 FEB

LONDON 'Urban Socialism & Rural Reality' by Chris Rose (FoE), Chris Smith MP. 10.30am County Hall, SE1. Adm. £3.25/£1.50 UB40. **Org. London branch, Socialist Countryside Grp.**

LONDON 'What's broadcasting got to do with you?' 10am-5pm Stockwell Park Sch. Clapham Rd, SW9. **Org. Southwark/Lambeth WEA.**

GLASGOW 'The Miners' Strike: A Cause for Concern'. 10.30am Adam Smith Building, Bute Gdns, Glasgow University. **Details: Stan Smith, English Dept. Dundee University 0382 23181 x 4528.**

LONDON Colombia – Peace or War? 6pm Labour Party Cttee. Rm. 129, Seven Sisters Rd, N1. Spkrs. Jeremy Corbyn MP, Malcolm Deas. **Org. Colombia Solidarity Cttee. 29 Islington Park St, N1.**

LONDON GLC Assembly on Abolition, ratecapping, jobs. Wembley Conference Centre. **Details: Rm. 217 County Hall 01-633 4400.**

BIRMINGHAM Labour & Unions – Keeping the Links campaign conf. with David Winnick MP, Jeremy McMullen, John Palmer. Digbeth Hall. **Details: Labour Co-ordinating Cttee, West Midlands 0785 43896.**

FORTHCOMING

25 FEB CAMBRIDGE Art Sale in Support of the Miners 8-11pm Fisher Hall, Guildhall St. Artists – please support the cause and donate yr. work. **Details: Julia Ball, 15 Beche Rd 0223 62787.**

25 FEB LONDON Joint meeting on Northern Ireland with Troops Out Movement. 7.30pm Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont St, WC1. Spkr. Tom Sheerin. **Details: Peter Langan, S. Camden CND, 34 Albert St, NW1. 01-380 1534.**

27 FEB LONDON 'Care in the Community & the Closure of Psychiatric Hospitals'. 6pm Cttee Rm. 8, House of Commons. Spkr. Dr. Leonard Fagan. **Org. Socialist Health Assoc. 195 Walworth Rd, SE17 01-703 6838.**

27 FEB LONDON 'Is Green Politics relevant to Defence' by Jonathon Porritt, Director of FoE. 7.30pm Three Horseshoes, 28 Heath St, NW3. Adm. Free. Drink/Food. **Org. Hampstead CND.**

27 FEB ILFORD Rally for the Miners with Mick McGahey, Gordon McLennan & Margaret Pearson of Barnsley Women against Pit Closures, Sue Smith from Barking Hospital Strikers. 7.45pm Lambourne Rms, Ilford Town Hall. **Org. Communist Party 01-478 2948.**

28 FEB LONDON 'Water supply & development' talk and launch of new solidarity campaign to help Mozambican women by providing water pumps. 6.30pm Africa Centre, King St, WC1. **Details: Mozambique Angola Cttee 01-888 1551/223 7841.**

2-3 MARCH LONDON Campaign Against Arms Trade 'Bread not Bombs' National Meeting at 111 Gower St, WC1 (Sat) Friends International Centre, Byng Pl, WC1 (Sun). **Bkings & Details: CAAT, 5 Caledonian Rd, N1 9DX 01-278 1976.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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Fabian Society Conference

NORTHERN IRELAND: BEYOND THE FORUM

This conference will try to examine the nature of nationalism and unionism, look at socialist perspectives emerging from political parties in Ireland and consider the future of Labour Party policy on the North.

Speakers include:
PETER ARCHER MP & MARY HOLLAND

7pm-9pm Friday &
10am-5pm Saturday
22 & 23 February 1985
Islington Town Hall,
Upper Street, N1
£2.50 Fabian members
£3.50 non-members

Send for details of the Conference and of Fabian Society membership to:

Fabian Society
11 Dartmouth Street,
London SW1H 9BN
tel. 01-222 8877

LONDON - WALES CONGRESS

9 March, London

One day conference to launch 'London Congress' in support of Welsh mining communities. Discussion of Welsh/London common experiences in struggle.

Speakers
Ken Livingstone, Dafydd Ellis Thomas MP, Ann Clwyd MP, Andrew Glyn.

Creche — Disabled Access
Fee (including lunch) £4/£2 UB40

Details: s.a.e. to: Dai Donavan, 360 Green Lanes, Haringey, London N8 0SD. Tel: 01-888 8335.

SEMINAR

German Historical Institute, London

Tuesday 19 Feb. 5 p.m.

Professor Peter-Christian Witt (Kassel/Oxford)

The German Mandarins 1871-1945: A Collective Biography

17 Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2LP
01-404 5486

Tea from 4.30 p.m.

Seminar starts 5 p.m.

MEETINGS

CAMDEN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP
CAMPAIGN AGAINST TORTURE

PUBLIC MEETING

Wed. 20 February 7.30 p.m.
Council Chamber, Camden Town Hall, Euston Road, London NW1.

Speakers include:
Frank Dobson MP
Francis Crook (National Campaign Co-Ordinator)
Constanze Villaseca (Chile)

SECTION TWO of the Official Secrets Act after Ponting. Public meeting at Lecture Hall, Central Hall, Westminster. Thursday 14 February. Speakers include: David Owen, David Steel, Jonathan Aitken, Des Wilson. 7.30-10 p.m. (Campaign for Freedom of Information).

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public talk Sunday 17 Feb 8 p.m. 'The Science of Magic'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

WORKSHOPS

PSYCHODRAMA & SOCIODRAMA TRAINING WORKSHOPS

With Marcia Karp & Ken Sprague

LONDON. 16-17 Feb Sociodrama Training Workshop; **16-17 March** Role Conflict For Women; **27-28 April** Completion is Letting Go; **25-26 May** Ways of Looking at Group Process.
At **The Centre, 12 Adelaide St., off Trafalgar Square.**

DEVON. Psychotherapy of Relationships. Residential.
3-9 March; 31 March-6 April; 12-18 May.

Information: Holwell Centre For Psychodrama, East Down, Barnstaple, N. Devon. Telephone 0271 82267

PURSUITS

ARE YOU interested? Widow, slim, active, early 60s, well educated, driver, looks for retired male — intelligent, sincere, driver, sense of humour. Box (07)0251.

AUTHOR/GHOST writer seeks non-smoking, enthusiastic partner, living in Manchester or London and possessing writing, research or business (marketing) skills. Box (06)0211.

BLACK/BRITISH lady seeking new friend/partner for companionship, outings, holidays. Nationality immaterial. Midlands area preferred, under 40. Box (07)0259.

CONTACT WANTED with organisations campaigning for establishment of a world government. Please help. (Mrs) Nirmala — NS, 216, Type Two, Kanpur — 16, U.P. 208016, India.

CULTURED, WELL-TRAVELLED, vivacious French lady of independent means, 54 (looking much younger), wishes to meet English gentleman of similar tastes, either in the North East or London for outings and/or travel. Box (07)0278.

HAPPINESS IS YOUR BIRTHRIGHT
Send your profile to People Line (75p at newsagents) and choose some new friends from all Greater London.
660 6066

HAVE A GAMBLE on me. Energetic woman, early sixties, N. London, loves cards, horse-racing, cinema, haunts and jaunts, seeks friends male and female, to share active and happy retirement. Are you game? Box (07)0263.

PARTY: 2 MARCH. Eclectic, sociopath male, 36, having party, meet compatible, kindred spirits/friends, amusing poseurs, social deviants & misfits. Fun times kids! Box (07)0252.

PLEASANT AMATEUR photographer seeks lively-minded, boney, artistic girl, interested in modelling in David Hamilton or Don Ovenden style studies. Surrey etc. Box (07)0248.

RETIRED, ALONE man, reasonable accom/pianist, SW London, seeks singer(s), instrumentalist(s) to play with. Also pied-a-terre — might suit woman musician exchange playing. Box (06)0238.

US MALE, professional, 56, desires educated, London theatre/restaurant companion in fifties/sixties, July-August. Box (05)0190.

SUMMER JOBS

'SUMMER JOBS ABROAD' and 'Summer Jobs in Britain'. Both list 30,000 varied vacancies and cost £4.95 each from bookshops or Vac-Work, 9 Park End Street, Oxford.

USA SUMMER JOBS: ranches, resorts, etc. Up to £200 per week. Directory listing 50,000 jobs in W.H. Smith, etc, or £6.95 from Vac-Work, 9 Park End Street, Oxford.

BOOKS/ PUBLICATIONS

DRUG ADDICTS — the road to freedom. 90 pages of interviews, case histories and research. A guide for parents, addicts and social workers. £1.95 + £1.50 p&p. Box 9987.

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermilion Books, 57 Red Lion St, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822.

SECONDHAND BOOKS wanted all types and quantities. Clifton Books, Southend (0702) 331004.

TOR, New Literary Magazine. Contributions welcome. Short Stories, reviews, poetry etc. Send material with SAE to: The Editors, T.O.R., Community Development Centre, 2 High Street, Omagh, Co. Tyrone, N.I.

WINGHALE BOOKS: specialists in 19th/20th century British Politics and Political History. Catalogues: Grassmere Cottage, Brigg Road, South Kelsey, Lincolnshire.

HEARTSEARCH

AFFECTIONATE, HUMOROUS man, 40+, who likes to talk, walk, cinema, music (Mozart to Dubliners — ghost busters theme!) — sought by single Mum, 40. Life pleasant, but could be better. Yearn for comfortable companion, but want sparkle too. Box (07)0275.

AMERICAN PILOT (Ultra-Conservative) in London every three/four months seeks unencumbered relationship with lady (30-40). Prefer Germanophile but all okay. Likes: History, Books, Theatre, Music, Humour, Guitar, Intelligent Conversation, Cognac. Photo please! Box (04) 0148.

ARE YOU a lively minded individual, 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

ARTICULATE, HAPPY, professional woman, 38, loves sailing, music, walking, children, friendships and good conversation. There must be an interesting, warm, intelligent man to *enrich life further. Box* (07)0266.

ATTRACTIVE, INTELLIGENT, solvent, unattached male (35-45), needed for attractive, intelligent etc. recently divorced female (44), with three smashing teenage sons, now needing diversion from domesticity. Photo appreciated. Box (07)0273.

ATTRACTIVE, LIVELY, sensuous woman lecturer (mid-30s), seeks warm, loving, caring, unattached man (25-45) with sense of fun to share time, travel and my bottle of wine. Box (07)0276.

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL man (58), loves arts, seeks attractive, sensual, non-smoking woman, slim/medium (any age to 53), any race/circumstance for warm friendship/enjoyments. Pref. London/surrounding area. Box (06)0229.

AUTHOR SEEKS non-smoking companion for hiking in South Pennines and possible collaboration on writing and guiding projects. Box (06)0212.

BRISTOL LADY, 38, with young son, warm, friendly, working, widely travelled, seeks cheerful man of broad outlook, view to lasting relationship & possible child. Box (06)0214.

BRRR! Warm Valentine needed by tall, slim, affectionate, presentable male, 45, to share fireside hugs, talking, listening, arts, travel, veggy cooking, lazy boating, life-exploring ups & downs of loving relationship. London area. Box (07)0270.

CARING, SENSITIVE Jewess (N/R), 54, 5'8", seeks non-smoking, socialist friends with whom to enjoy theatre, ballet, scrabble, veggy meals. Based London/Essex borders. Box (06)0231.

COUNTRY/DOG/home-loving writer (f. 37, div.), temporarily London-based, with teenage children. Vegetarian, conservationist, graduate, theist, gardener, bookworm; seeks gentle countryman soulmate. Box (07)0271.

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011.

DORMANT DAYDREAMER seeks his Lucy Jordan. Bookish and fickle; loves tilting at windmills and tweaking their noses. He's tired of cocoa and ready for love. All letters answered. Photo if possible. Box (07)0254.

ERRATIC COMMUTER between Scotland's capitals, gay, 34, in broadcasting, seeks guy of roughly similar age, to revive interest in the joys of theatre, cinema, walking, food and whatever. Box (06)0205.

EXCEPTIONALLY TOLERANT, warm-hearted, relaxed man, 40s or 50s, unattached, needed by prickly, independent, highly intelligent, impetuous woman. Companionship and possibly more. Box (07)0249.

FEMALE GRADUATE, socialist green, 32, sociable, educated, sensitive, stable, humorous, positive, nature-loving, interests simple and academic, seeks similar man, returnable photo appreciated. London. Box (06)0213.

GOOD LOOKING woman of character, aged 49, seeks marriage-minded male, who is a house owner and Labour Party supporter. Box (07)0267.

GUARDIAN-READING female graduate, 43, affectionate, usual cultural interests, seeks tallish, caring, non-smoking male with sense of humour, for lasting relationship. S. London, Surrey. Box (07)0256.

INTELLIGENT, LIVELY lady, 41, offers caring, warmth (and maybe more) to an unattached, leftish man, of wit, humour and sensitivity. Box (06)0223.

IRISH GUY, 33, intelligent, solvent, interesting Gemini, living Bloomsbury, seeks intelligent, assertive female with interests, feelings and needs. Please ring 01-837 2052.

LEFTISH LEO lady (31), presentable, friendly, outgoing. Demanding job (anti-social hours) seeks tolerant intelligent, cheerful male friends, aged 30-40, North West area. Box (06) 0224.

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LONDON BASED professional woman, mid forties, seeks professional man, 40-60, to share arts, travel, cinema and caring relationship. Non-smoker please. Box (06)0240.

LONDON MALE, 37, university scientist with many arts interests (especially classical music), well-travelled, not married! Keen on books, films, hiking, cooking Indian food, seeks warm, compatible, non-smoking woman, 25-40 (could be a single parent). Box (07)0268.

MALE GRADUATE, 43, Lancashire-Yorkshire area, historical interests and work, would like to meet/correspond with affectionate, humorous female, who values love and companionship more than material success. Box (06)0209.

MALE, 41, married but missing warmth and intimacy seeks female, 30s, possibly similarly placed, for necessarily occasional but caring, hopefully long-lasting friendship. London. Box (05)0195.

MAN, 31, good-looking, sensitive, loving; lecturer; seeks attractive, slim female: Lancashire area. Varied interests: photo please. Box (07)0261.

SEXAGENARIAN GENTLEMAN of literary tastes, articulate, witty, personable, tall, seeks friendship with similar lady, living London, whose other virtues will also include discretion. Box (07)0269.

TALL, ATTRACTIVE female, 32, warm and caring, seeks personable, together man of intelligence and integrity, for stimulating relationship. London area. Box (07)0255.

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WASHED BY the tides of life but still afloat. Unattached, 29 years, reasonably affluent male with no known hang-ups, seeks female company, with a view to long-term relationship. London area. Box (07)0253.

WOMAN, 34, *North Worcs, seeks warm,* unattached, intelligent, funny country-lover, thirties. Herefords/Worcs or nearby, to share happy times and escapades. Interests: walking, music, arts, politics. Photo appreciated. Box (07)0272.

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Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum' and 'The Week-end Review'. Registered as a newspaper. Typesetting by Sirron Typesetting, 14a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0DP.
Printed by Benham & Co Ltd, Sheepen Place, Colchester CO3 3LH. Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd at 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

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